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Michigan Management and
Executive Development Studies #7

A Managerial Profile:

The Chinese Manager

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The Division of Executive Education
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Introduction

What follows is a statement profiling selected Chinese managers, continuing a series of monographs published at The School of Business Administration, The University of Michigan. Previously, publications have appeared under the following titles: *A Managerial Profile: The Woman Manager* (1985); *A Managerial Profile* (1984); *The Newly Promoted Executive: A Study in Corporate Leadership* (annually, 1983-87); *A Managerial Profile: The Asian Manager* (1987b); and *A Review of Managers in U.S. Industries* (1987a).

All the above studies, including the 436 Chinese managers described in this monograph, responded to similar questionnaires in order to permit both longitudinal and cross-comparisons. Data summaries of the monographs have appeared in scholarly journals, professional association publications, and in newspapers and periodicals in the U.S. and in foreign countries.

Two central goals underlie the research: (1) to create a descriptive profile of the Chinese manager, particularly those located in Beijing; and (2) to compare those Chinese managers with comparable Asian and U.S. managers. Hopefully the investigation will result in better understanding of and communication with those leaders who have significant managerial positions in Chinese enterprises. Understanding both similarities and differences creates opportunities for improved commercial relationships. To achieve these goals, the monograph focuses on five divisions: (1) Background information to the research; (2) Career patterns of Chinese managers; (3) Education Levels; (4) Sociological Patterns; and (5) Lifestyles.

When reading the statement readers must be aware that the mainland Chinese managers responded to the questionnaire from their cultural perspective. In other words, some of the differences between China and other nations are a direct result of economic, political, and cultural differences. Readers should recognize that cultural backgrounds do affect the responses, both by male and female respondents.

We are grateful for the opportunity to conduct this managerial research in China. We are especially grateful to the various Beijing enterprises which participated in the study.

Herbert W. Hildebrandt
Jinyun Liu

Background

As stated previously, the central purpose of the investigation is to add to cultural understanding of selected Chinese (People's Republic of China) managers so that when dealing with those persons other foreign managers and businesses will through that understanding improve their communication and business relationships, similar to work completed by Everett, Krishnan, and Stening (1984); Singh (1981); and Lim and Gosling (1983).

In capsule form, the chronology between 1985-87 followed these steps:

1. Selection of questions from ongoing research of the *Newly Promoted Executive* (Hildebrandt, Miller, Bond, Edington, 1983-87); *A Review of Managers in U.S. Industries* (Hildebrandt, Miller, Edington, 1987a); *A Managerial Profile: The Asian Manager* (Hildebrandt, Edington, 1987b); and *A Managerial Profile: The Woman Manager* (Hildebrandt, Miller, LaCivita, 1985).
2. Initial discussions with Chinese scholars at The University of Michigan to determine sensitivity and wording of certain questions.
3. Draft translation of pilot questionnaire into Mandarin; verification of translation against English original.
4. Typeset of Mandarin questionnaire in Hong Kong and verification of proper language by selected immigrated Chinese living in Hong Kong, fluent in Mandarin, and often visiting China for business.
5. Mandarin questionnaire and interviews held with selected immigrated Chinese in Hong Kong and in China with managers and scholars: language problems clarified, sensitive questions rewritten, misunderstandings clarified, preliminary data analyzed.
6. Second draft Mandarin questionnaire redrawn in U.S.; typeset of Mandarin questionnaire completed in Hong Kong.

7. A 32-item questionnaire administered by members of Beijing management institutes and others, in 1987.
8. Questionnaires returned to U.S. where Chinese scholar and U.S. author twice reviewed all Mandarin questionnaires prior to data entry.

The final data base resulted in an N of 436 Chinese managers, 282 males and 150 females (4 did not indicate their sex). In order to effect comparisons with similar counterparts in the U.S. and Asia, we turned to the data base of U.S. managers (N = 6,223); Asian managers (N = 319); and occasional references to U.S. Chairmen, Presidents, and Vice-presidents (N = 7,419), herein called Executives. Chinese managerial lifestyles were compared with 8,720 of their U.S. counterparts on the basis of age, sex, and education, selected from the data base (N = 200,000) in the University's Department of Physical Education. The reason some data bases are so large is that the U.S. data collection is ongoing, with results published yearly or bi-annually.

While this monograph is primarily descriptive, analysis and inferences will occur when sharp differences are evident. That discussion will occur contiguous to the data presentation. Structure for the presentation will parallel the questionnaire: Career Path; Education; Sociological Patterns; and Lifestyles, to which we shall now turn.

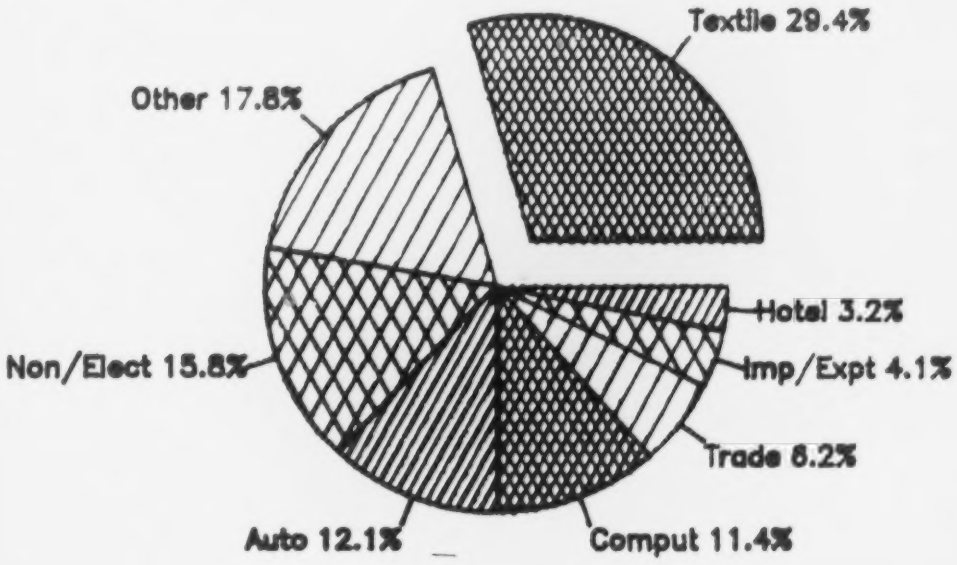
CAREER PATH

1. Industries Represented

Over thirty-one manufacturing and non-manufacturing Chinese industries are represented in the sample. Because the focus was upon specific industries, the majority of responses came predominantly from seven which closely participated in the study: Textile Manufacturing (29.4 percent); Non-electrical Machinery (15.8 percent); Automotive Manufacturing (12.1 percent); Computer Technology Manufacturing (11.4 percent); Wholesale Trade (6.2 percent); Import/Export Services (4.1 percent); and Hotel Management (3.2 percent).

The remainder of the sample (17.8 percent) — often with few persons in the group — came from diverse categories such as the government, education, and the legal area.

Chinese Industries Studied



Thus the data are more representative of manufacturing managers rather than non-manufacturing, somewhat influencing the conclusions drawn in later analyses. Simply for contrast, in 1952, 56.9 percent of the gross output value of China stemmed from agriculture and only 15.3 percent from heavy industry. By 1985 those data showed an agricultural decline to 34.3 percent of gross output value but an increase in heavy industry to 35 percent. (*Statistical Yearbook [China Stat]*, 1987, p. 20)

An interesting fact is that in only the textile industry do the women outnumber the men: 51.2 percent to the males' 48.8 percent. Overall, the one-third female managerial presence is quite parallel to U.S. and Asian managers where 20 percent of the managerial workforce were women (Hildebrandt, Miller, Edington, 1987a, 1987b), but slightly lower than the data cited in the *Statistical Abstract of the United States [Stat Abst U.S.]*, (1987), which suggests females hold 42.7 percent of the managerial and professional positions. In Great Britain 20 percent of the managerial workforce are women. (Davidson & Cooper, 1987) *Total* Chinese women in the workforce in 1985 was 36.4 percent of the total labor force. (*China Stat*, 1987, p. 103)

If there is a bias toward sexual stereotypes and type of industry, it is that Chinese women are disproportionately represented in the textile field. On the other hand — and to the credit of China's insistence on the omission of sexual stereotypes across industry lines — women are represented in managerial positions in many industries.

2. Enterprise[2] Size

It is not difficult to aver that the data represent larger industries, a precise two-thirds (66.6 percent) of the managers coming from firms in excess of 2,700 employees. In part this skewed information is due to accessibility; the larger firms being easier to contact for purposes of the study.

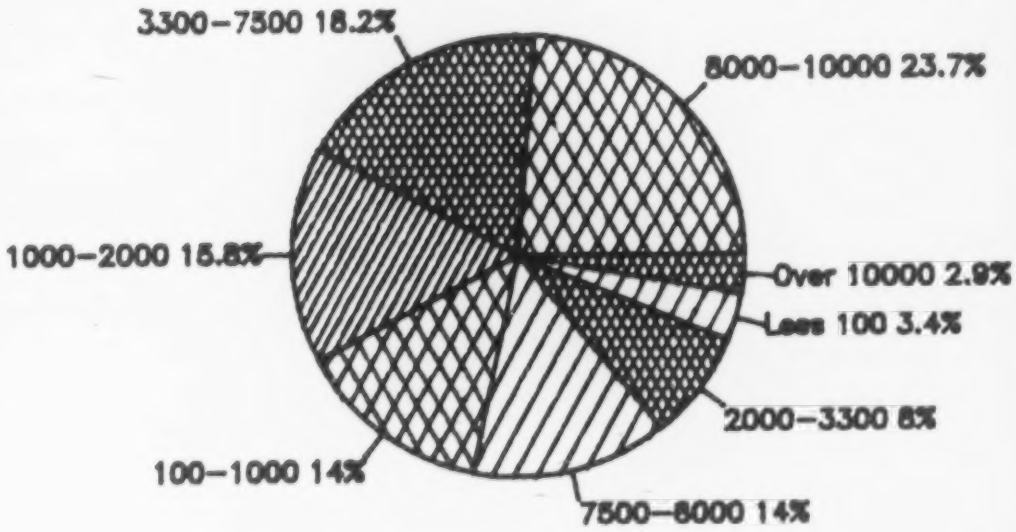
There is currently discussion on how to measure the size of Chinese enterprises. Some suggest that on the basis of employee numbers 3,000 and above is large; 500 to 3,000 medium; and below 500 a small enterprise. We had no way of knowing the gross operating revenue of the enterprises studied, so the classifications which follow are more labor rather than capital intensive. If classification were on the basis of gross operating revenue — a common measure for size in the U.S. — some Chinese feel a large company would gross in excess of 50 million yuan; a medium enterprise 5 to 50 million yuan; and a small one less than 5 million yuan. But no formal government statement for the moment is forthcoming.

An exact number of enterprises by employee number is seen in the following table.

Table 1
Enterprise Size by Employee Number

Employees	*Percentage*
Less than 100	3.4
100-500	10.0
500-1,000	4.0
1,000-2,000	15.8
2,000-3,330	8.0
3,330-7,500	18.2
7,500-8,000	14.0
8,000-10,000	23.7
Over 10,000	2.9
	100.0*

*Rounding will sometimes result in percentages greater or less than 100%. In some instances a very precise number-of-employee figure was used by respondents, that common figure being given the managers by top management.



Chinese Managers

3. Time Spent with Present Enterprise

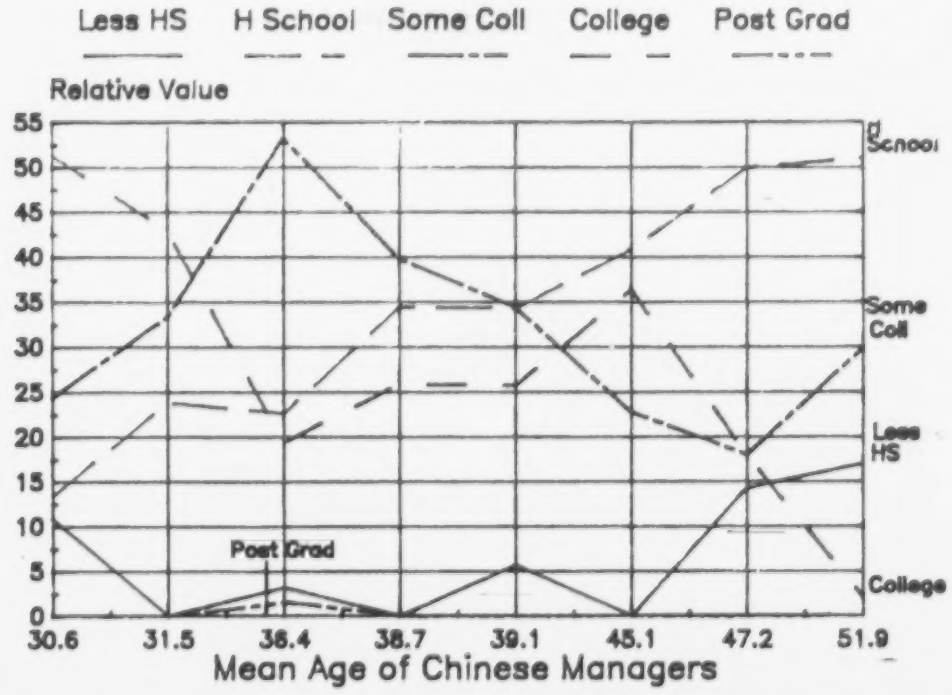
General Secretary Zhao Ziyang, in speaking to the 13th National Congress of the Communist Party of China on October 25, 1987, made these statements:

> Basically, the development of science and technology, the revitalization of the economy, and indeed the progress of the whole society all depend on improving the quality of the work force and training large numbers of competent personnel. Education is of fundamental importance to the fulfillment of our great long-range mission. We must therefore continue to stress the strategic role of education and do a better job of tapping intellectual resources. As the economy develops, the state should increase year by year the funds allocated for education,

> while continuing to encourage people from all walks of life to raise money to set up new schools. We should stick to the principle that education must serve socialist modernization. (Zhao, 1987)

Educational data, correlated with the years spent with the present employer — in the manufacturing and non-manufacturing categories noted in question one — suggest that none of the managers with an enterprise in excess of 25 years had a post-graduate[3] degree. For example, in 1952 there were only 2,763 graduate students (*China Stat*, 1987, p. 629) compared with 87,331 enrolled in 1986. Moreover, within that same span of years, nearly a third (31.3 percent) had less than a high school education. Predictably, with China's increased national emphasis on education, the younger managers — mean age 31.5, and employed in a company less than one year — obtained an undergraduate education (42.9 percent). Those young employees with an enterprise 1-5 years — mean age 30.6 — have the highest undergraduate degree percentage, 51.4 percent.

Education/Age Comparison



In other words, younger managers are better educated than their older counterparts. For instance, only 20 percent of the managers with a company in excess of 15 years obtained an undergraduate degree.

Yet a lack of mobility characterizes the Chinese manager: just over a quarter (27 9 percent) of them spending in excess of 21 years with the same enterprise. Asian and U.S. managers in excess of 21 years with a company had respective percentages of 2.8 and 12.7, the Asians suggest thereby even more mobility than the U.S. Of the 141 managers working in Beijing, 95 percent of them were born in Beijing; thus, only 5 percent of the managers came from outside the city, for three potential reasons noted in the following paragraphs. Only 1.7 percent of Chinese female managers working in Beijing came from outside the city, again attesting to the axiom that females particularly born in Beijing work in Beijing.

A brief statement of the communist worker's dependence (Walder, 1985) on the enterprise is in order, for several factors do and often did have an influence on the longer time in grade of the Chinese managers when compared with other managerial systems.

(1). Economically a state-owned factory in China is influenced via central government planning, suggesting that a high degree of control over the enterprise and the employee is centrally administered. Thus for a manager to leave his or her place of work is possible but economically infeasible for in so doing a manager would lose seniority — if he went to a collective or private enterprise — and have to begin anew in his or her other position. If another state enterprise would accept them the seniority would carry over, but to be accepted is no minor task. Additionally, a housing move most likely would be involved, moving to the housing units of the new unit; this too would require approval. Finally, to give up many state supported benefits — if one wished to move to a collective enterprise — could result in loss, for instance, of death benefits, minor dependent benefits, and usually a decrease in old-age pensions. Worker welfare via the

enterprise is not an easy perquisite to omit, particularly because some units are total working and living environments. (Schermerhorn, 1987; Nelson and Reeder, 1985) Economic reasons become forceful motivations for remaining in the same unit, regardless of personal likes or dislikes.

(2). Politically — a detailed discussion of the political structure follows in section 5 of this paper — the communist party has a parallel structure to the central government's structure and role within Chinese enterprises. Workers' political attitudes are observed and evaluated in addition to one's work, in part illustrated in a statement by Committee Secretary Xing Chungzhi (Top Cadres, 1987) of Hebei Province:

> We are not accusing these young cadres of being good for nothing or that all of them are bad, but there really exists a problem of upgrading their ideological and political quality. Education in the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism is a most fundamental education which must never be overlooked.

Such a political oversight group includes a second form of employee control, influencing promotions, raises, and in some instances denying approval of leaving an enterprise.

(3). A third reason for lack of mobility is migration policies. Workers, managers included, may more easily move from larger cities as Beijing, Shanghai, or Tinanjin to medium-sized cities, to smaller cities, to towns, to the countryside. But to move in reverse order is difficult, those constraints being enacted in the 1950s in an attempt to control large migrations to the cities, where were located the industries and larger cooperatives. Indeed, neighborhood committees keep track of the number of persons within a home/apartment to ensure no additional friends or family members move into the area.

In short, individual mobility may be desired, but the impediments imposed via central planning, the Party, and migration policies are exterior constraints over which the manager has little control, forcing him or her to remain in the same position much longer than in western countries.

Adding the factor of age produces no surprises: the older-aged managers have been with a firm longer. Managers in excess of 30 years had a mean age of 51.9; those with the same enterprise 26 to 30 years had a mean age of 47.2.

Table 2 lists the number of years with an employer along with the sex, mean ages, and education of the managers.

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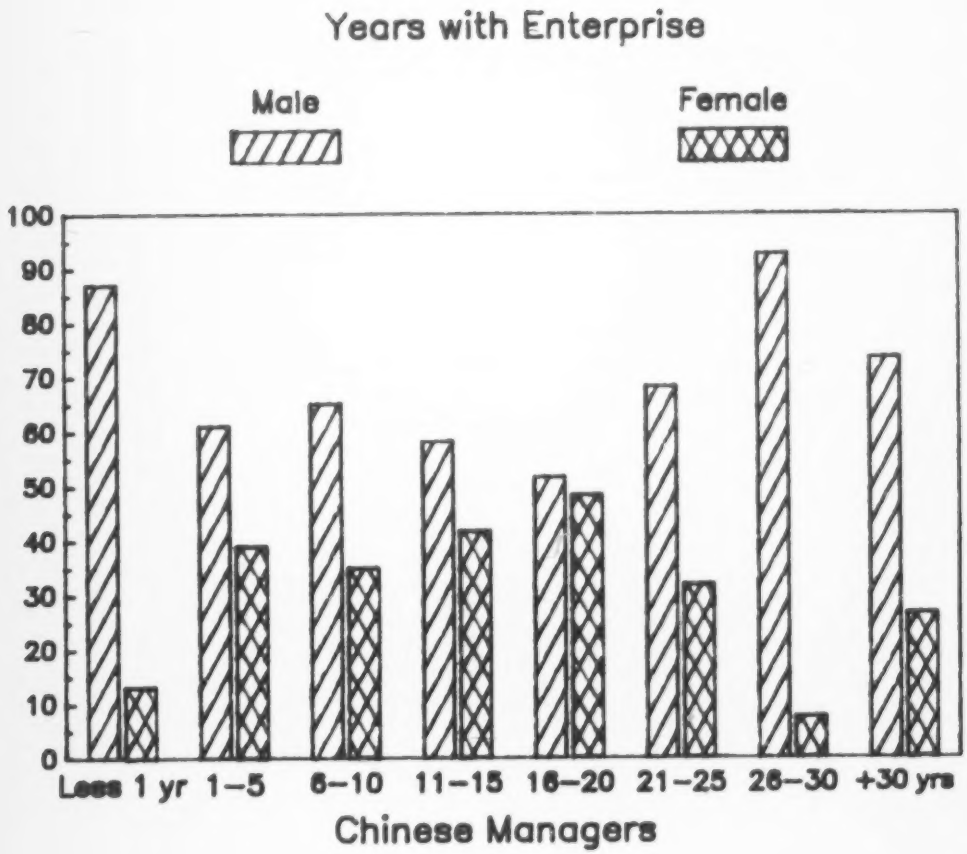
Table 2
Years with Enterprise, Plus Age, Sex, Education

	Years	*Sex*		*Education*					*Age*
	%	*Male* %	*Female* %	*Less than H.S.*	*H.S.*	*Some College*	*College Degree*	*Post-Graduate*	*Mean*
Less than 1 yr.	5.3	87.0	13.0	—	23.8	33.3	42.9	—	31.5
1-5	30.4	61.1	38.9	10.8	13.5	34.3	51.4	—	30.6
6-10	14.5	65.1	34.9	3.2	22.6	53.2	19.4	1.6	36.4
11-15	8.3	58.3	41.7	5.7	34.3	34.3	25.7	—	39.1
16-20	13.6	51.7	48.3	—	34.5	39.7	25.9	—	38.7
21-25	10.1	68.2	31.8	—	40.9	22.7	36.4	—	45.1
26-30	6.5	92.6	7.4	14.3	50.0	17.9	17.9	—	47.2
Over 30	11.3	73.5	26.5	17.0	51.1	29.8	2.1	—	51.9



4. Length of Time in Previous Position

Lack of mobility for the Chinese manager is further supported when viewing the time spent in a previous position. However, opportunities for promotion will increase if at least one of General Secretary Zhao's economic reforms and his managerial criterion for reward can be implemented:

> Select qualified managers through competition, and reward or penalize them mainly according to the economic performance of the enterprises, including the increase or decrease in their assets, so as to help a large number of capable and daring entrepreneurs to emerge in the course of keen competition for markets. (Zhao, 1987)

Review of the data suggests that the level of education makes little difference as to the rate of promotability within a company as both lesser educated persons with at least a high school education and those with an undergraduate degree spend similar amounts of time in their previous positions.

Vividly different than their Asian counterparts, 27.4 percent of Chinese managers spent 15 or more years in a previous position; 13.8 percent, 11 to 15 years; and 10.7 percent, 6 to 10 years, suggesting that promotions and movements laterally or vertically come slowly when compared with other Asians. Only 6.9 percent of the Asian managers, for instance, were in their previous position 15 or more years.

Long lengths of time spent in previous positions are a result of the current managerial system. It is difficult to leave a company; it is difficult to move from one position to another; it is difficult to change any pattern once the worker has a given role within an industry. Nelson and Reeder (1985) assert that at least 90 percent of the Chinese workforce remains at the same position, only personnel selected for managerial roles assuming different jobs for training purposes. One manager according to Nelson and Reeder (1985, p. 21) stated, "We believe a worker should do one kind of work. Some work is complicated. He will do it better and have better suggestions than if he knows only a little about several different jobs."

It appears that three options for moving out of an enterprise are possible:

(1). An employee proves him or herself so competent that they are asked to move from their present workplace — usually defined as a physical location — to another workplace within the same enterprise under the same ministry. For instance, a textile manager of factory #1 ultimately responsible to the Ministry of Textile could be promoted to a higher position in textile factory #2 as determined by leaders at a

higher level. In other words, a higher level authority most often makes the decision to promote an employee, the employee having little force in changing his or her position.

To move to another workplace in another enterprise under a different ministry is more difficult, regardless of managerial competence. A higher level authority must give approval of a change in position.

(2). Some managers selectively curry the favor of leaders, specifically the President and the Party Secretary of the work unit, often through various forms of support. It is not unheard of for networks to flourish in some enterprises, promoting some employees who are looked upon favorably regardless of job competence. To incur disfavor from above can have severe effects: perhaps slowing promotions, losing face, or even resulting in a job transfer. (Chesanow, 1985)

(3). Employees below the age of 25 may want to apply for a college entrance examination hoping thereby to remove themselves from the company position in which they currently work. If they pass the college entrance examination, the employees then attend college, at the end of which the government assigns them a new position — as based on several employee ranked choices — to an enterprise which is in need of their expertise.

Currently there is dissatisfaction among some students who pass their entrance examinations and obtain a higher education, especially in the U.S. *China Youth News* noted, "We are a country with a severe shortage of qualified personnel. Yet in many places a large amount of talent is kept idle and wasted." (Gargan, 1987) For instance, some Chinese students worked hard to obtain an MBA degree and returned to China, but then were assigned managerial positions which did not make good use of their advanced business training. Indeed, currently within the U.S. there are over 30,000 Chinese students and visiting

scholars, some of whom may delay their return for fear of not receiving a position commensurate with their advanced academic training. Recognizing the issue, top Chinese leaders including acting Prime Minister Li Peng, have given priority to investigating the problem. (Gargan, 1987)

Lack of job opportunities commensurate with academic training is also a criticism leveled by students of some Chinese universities. Limited job opportunities and assignment of all but a few positions by the State (Ignatius, 1987) is causing increasing concern on college campuses. Increasingly, educated students, those who are potential managers and leaders by virtue of their education, seek more of a say in job allocation, an area affecting them directly.

Currently, Chinese readers are aware that changes are underway to permit higher educated students to select their own jobs after graduation. A recent meeting (January 1988) of the State Education Commission has implemented a new policy to begin in 1993 of supplying employers with information on higher educated students. On the other hand employers will supply the Commission with their employment needs. As a result, prospective students will be able to select a job based on those openings, and, after having passed an employment examination, will be able to sign an employment contract. Beijing's Qinghua University and Shanghai's Jiaotong University will immediately try out the new system. (College Graduates to Choose Jobs, 1988)

Special incentives will be offered those students who elect to work in remote and backward areas of the country.

It seems that institutions of higher education will also be influenced through students selecting their own positions. For instance, if many enterprises request students trained in certain subjects and the institutions have not offered those subjects, those students may have a more difficult time locating a job. Hence, institutions may begin to alter their curriculums to meet the needs of the enterprises.

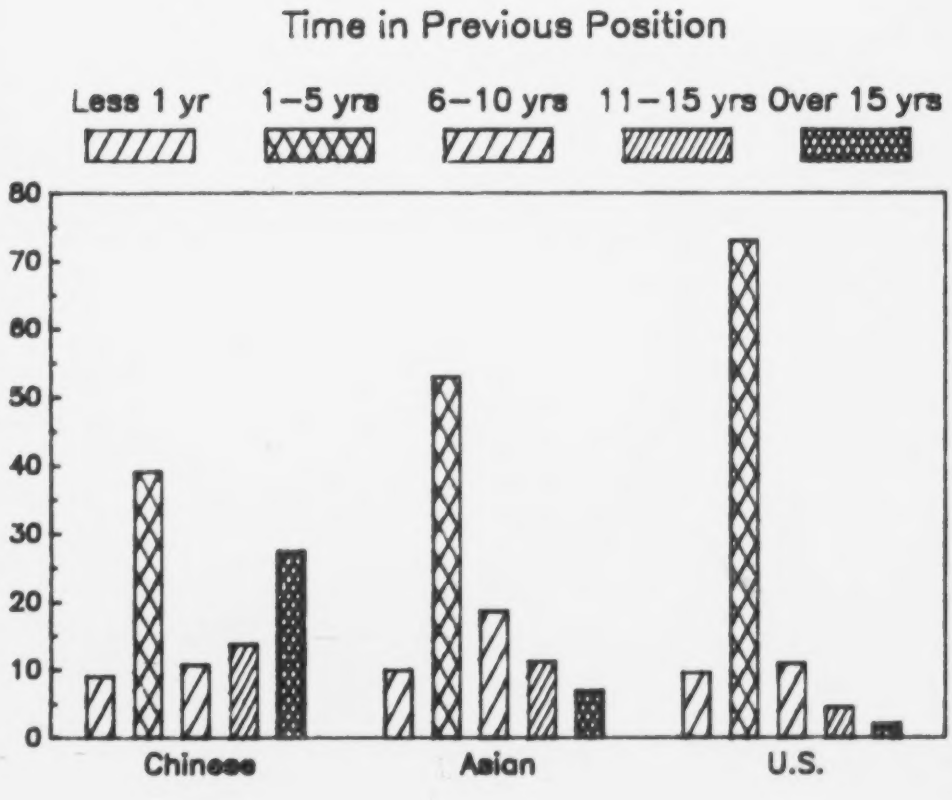
It is therefore difficult to move out of a unit; there is rigidity in the system which encourages, indeed supports employees remaining life-long with the enterprise recommended to him or her by the government. Hence, Chinese managers, in comparison to their U.S. and Asian counterparts, are limited in their ability to move out of the enterprise selected for them. However, radical changes in the current lifetime job security structure (Bronfenbrenner, 1984) will apparently be met with resistance because the "iron rice bowl" (life-long job security) concept is now strongly entrenched in the workers.

Nevertheless, there are winds of change blowing through Chinese enterprises. (Adoption of Labor, January 4, 1988) One variation is the contract concept whereby employees/managers contract on their own with an enterprise — say for as long as three years — for an agreed upon sum of money and other benefits. At the end of their contract they may be asked to remain or are released to search out another enterprise, including possibly joint venture firms who because of the gradual liberalization of the labor market, may recruit competent people provided housing and other perquisites are available. (How PRC Joint, January 18, 1988) Such changing of employer locations, while giving employees an opportunity to change positions also jeopardizes their life-long work concept and could result in a group of migrant workers/managers. Some argue that 3 percent of the contract workers are looking for new jobs, seeking new contract opportunities on the expiration of their previous contract. (Chip Off the Old Bowl, 1987)

Comparative data for time spent in a previous position appears in the following table.

Table 3
Time in Previous Position

Time	*Chinese*	*Asian*	*U.S.*
Less than 1 yr.	9.0%	9.9%	9.6%
1-5 yrs.	39.1	52.9	73.0
6-10 yrs.	10.7	18.6	10.9
11-15 yrs.	13.8	11.2	4.5
Over 15 yrs.	27.4	6.9	2.0

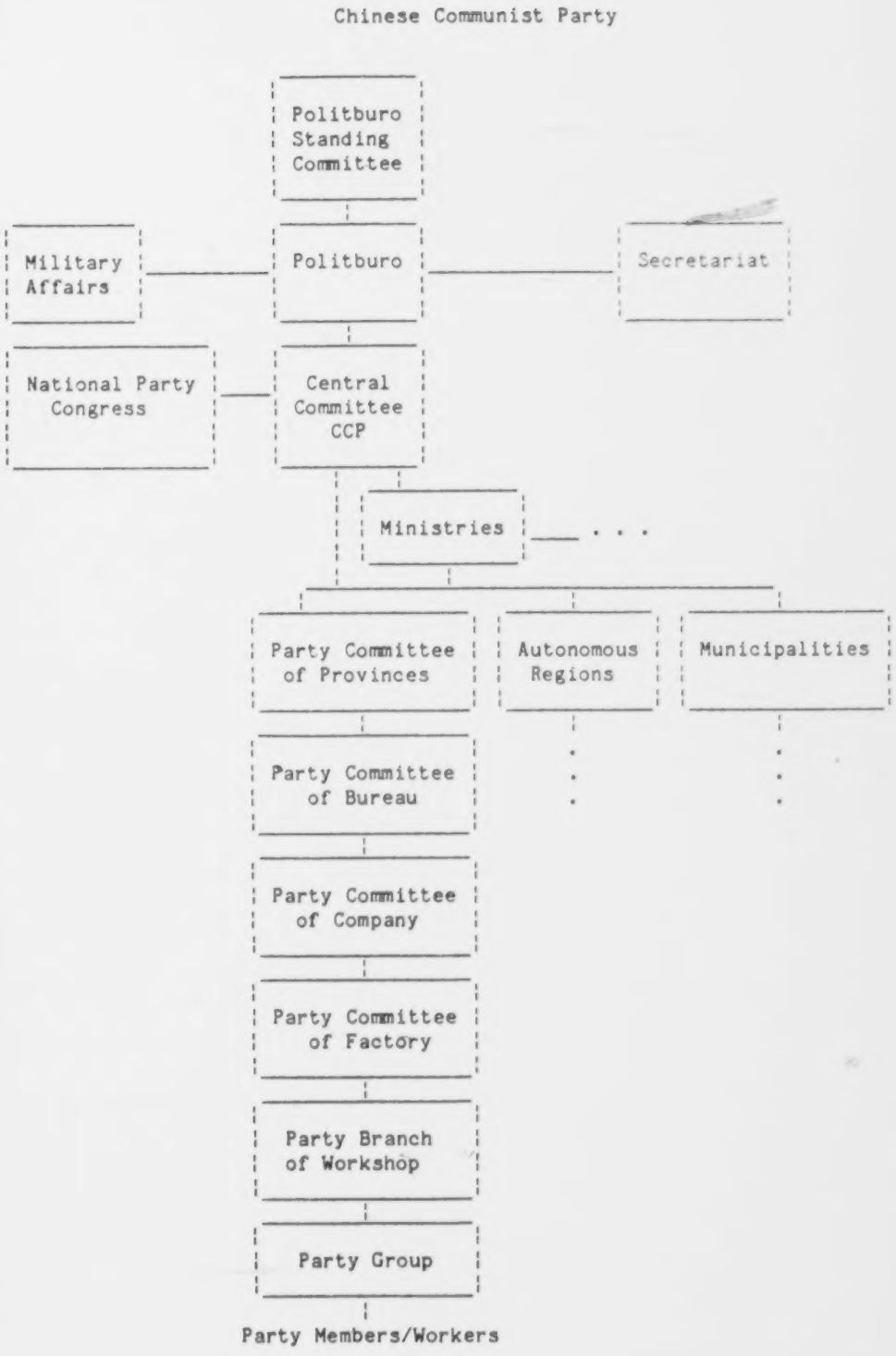


5. Areas of Responsibility

One of the revealing indices for tracing the careers of U.S. and Asian managers and U.S. executives is their career movement through functional areas. The Chinese study uses those same tracking criteria but adds an additional one not found in western societies: political and ideological responsibilities, two micro areas holding significant positions in macro governmental and political structure. This background is important to understanding the specific career paths of Chinese managers.

Chinese Communist Party

To understand the Chinese Communist Party (hereafter referred to as the CCP) and its influence in business, the following simplified diagram suggests a structure parallel to the government.


Chinese Communist Party
Politburo Standing Committee
Military Affairs
Politburo
Secretariat
National Party Congress
Central Committee CCP
Ministries
. . .
Party Committee of Provinces
Autonomous Regions
Municipalities
Party Committee of Bureau
Party Committee of Company
Party Committee of Factory
Party Branch of Workshop
Party Group
Party Members/Workers

General Secretary Zhao heads a standing committee of the Politburo which in turn is responsible to the Central Committee of the CCP. Central Committee doctrines are disseminated to the Ministries, the Bureaus, the Provinces, the Autonomous Regions, the Municipalities, the Companies, the Factories, and Workshops, and the Party Groups. On each level are located CCP members, each working to ensure adherence to and seeking support for the communist principles laid out by the top echelon Politburo Standing Committee.

Consequently, some CCP party secretaries are present in factories to act as oversight persons ensuring acceptance of political and ideological principles of the party. Few do manual labor, few engage in direct production activities, labor over a machine, or operate advanced technological devices. They instead are within factories for four core purposes:

(1). To communicate higher level instructions and documents summarizing doctrines of the party, disseminating these throughout the organization, at all levels, to all workers.

(2). To organize discussion cells wherein communist doctrines may be reviewed and communicated. An example would be that General Secretary Zhao's October 1987 speech could be reviewed and analyzed by factory members of the CCP and non-members.

(3). To act as an oversight group, determining that the principles of the CCP are implemented and adhered to with minimum diversions. Some Chinese suggest that exactitude to communist principles is a requirement within any factory if that factory is to be truly communist. Adherence to four cardinal principles must also occur, as they are the political and ideological touchstones which a CCP member uses as a yardstick: (1) Keeping to the socialist road; (2) Upholding the people's democratic leadership; (3) Accepting leadership of the communist party; and (4) Accepting Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong thought.

(4). To enlist new members of the factory into the CCP, and if the potential members are accepted, thereby enlarge the party base in the factory.

One can quickly see that this ideological path places individuals whose sole purpose within units is not to oversee production, rather adherence to and support for communist principles. When 133 enterprises were asked (Han and Ma, 1981; Xiao, 1981) which factors contributed to the "good" performance of their enterprise, nonintervention of the Party committee in administrative matters was a positive factor. Thus Party intervention and its separation from enterprise functioning was an early theme, later carried forward by General Secretary Zhao (Zhao, 1987) in October 1987 along with six other points concerning needed reforms:

(1). Separating Party and government
(2). Delegating powers to lower levels
(3). Reforming government organs
(4). Reforming the personnel system relating to cadres
(5). Establishing a system of consultation and dialogue
(6). Improving a number of systems relating to socialist democracy
(7). Strengthening the socialist legal system (Zhao, 1987)

Therefore, the government is aware of the current influence of Party secretaries and overlapping responsibilities. On the other hand, workers whose sole effort is directed at political/ideological persuasion recognize the importance of that position and are reluctant to give it up. In the current study 4.7 percent of the managers began their careers in the political/ideological category; that position represents a major divergence from Asian and U.S. managerial groups. More significantly, over one-quarter (27.3 percent) of the Chinese managers later suggest that the political/ideology area is one of the fastest routes to positions of importance within a business organization, a promotional track unheard of in the West,

yet one which even young people consider a significant motivator for their promotion. Lindsay and Dempsey (1985) include a revealing statement by a student:

> Political education is an indispensable part of our motivating strategy. Because our country is poor, we have to educate people to cherish novel ideas as one of the motivating forces in their work while making every effort possible to improve people's livelihood.
>
> We Communists believe that there is something else besides the satisfaction of people's basic needs, which can also motivate people to show what they really can do. So, we should never forget, while trying to satisfy the basic needs of the people, our political education of the people. We educate our people with Communist spirit, mobilize them with the spirit of self-reliance, and arouse their enthusiasm with patriotism.

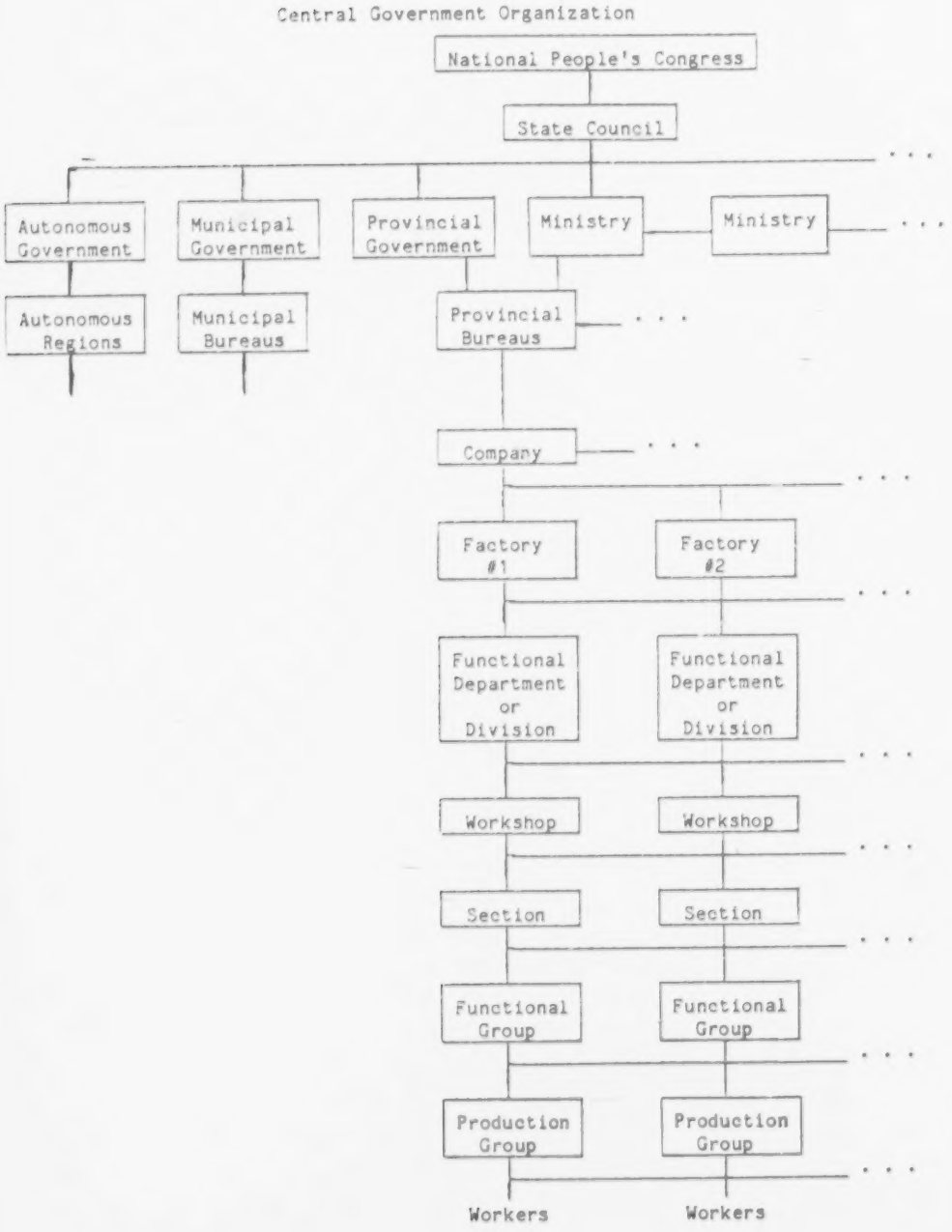
Central Government Operation

In order to see the interrelationships between the CCP and government operations, and the bureaucracy occasioned thereby, a chart of the Central Government Organization briefly lays out the structure.

Theoretically the National People's Congress is the ultimate governmental authority on the national or central government level. That authority, in turn, extends down to the 21 provinces, 5 autonomous regions, and the 3 municipal governments of Beijing, Shanghai, and Tianjin being treated as a Municipality. Day-to-day operations of the central government are handled through the State Council and the numerous Ministries, such as the Ministry of Textile Industry, Ministry of Light Industry, or the Ministry of Petroleum Industry, plus other commissions, committees, and bureaus. (Saich, 1981, p. 128) Thus, for example, some of the managers in this study are under the control of the Ministry of Textile.

At the next level — the autonomous regions, municipalities, and provincial governments — there is an almost parallel structure to that of the central gov-

ernment. (Jan, 1966; Richman, 1969) Day-to-day operations are handled by respective governments who in turn oversee many bureaus, comparable to the responsibilities of the Ministries. Beyond the Province, for instance, are somewhat parallel structures for the county and city.



Ultimately comes the company, i.e., it in a sense is the corporation in charge of similar types of factories producing similar products, and in a real sense relate to the various governmental levels described above. Take one example, that of the R&D (Research and Development) function. At the Ministry of Textile level there are four institutes with 1,078 workers in this function alone; in the Ministry of Machine Building there are 61 institutes and 41,749 workers (*China Stat*, 1987, p. 662). In fact, as of 1986 there were 744 R&D agencies with a total of 336,062 workers under control of the State Council.

Within the factories are the functional departments or divisions — e.g., production, sales, planning — and beneath them in decreasing size and more specialization are the workshops, sections, functional groups, production groups, and finally the workers. Most middle-managers in this study came from the factory through the workshop level, or at the level we would call upper middle-management.

Even in this over-simplified presentation of the government's planning role in Chinese enterprises, it does not take long to see the stifling bureaucracy and diminished decision-making power of the managers as China makes progress in modernizing its management system. (Walder, 1985; Wang, 1986; Engle, 1986; Laaksonen, 1984; and Jones, 1984) Concern about the current bureaucracy was one of the General Secretary Zhao's themes, "Chief among these [some problems in the current structure] defects are overconcentration of power, a serious degree of bureaucratism, and feudal influences that are far from eliminated." (Zhao 1987)

Managers thus face several authorities: the Communist Party of China which is present at all levels, and the central government planning through its ministries, bureaus, and commissions. It is this very overlapping, this party-government pluralism which produces managerial confusion that General Secretary Zhao wishes to change: "But one long-standing problem has not yet been completely solved: the lack of distinction between the functions of the Party and those of the government and the substitution of the

Party for the government." (Zhao, 1987) General Secretary Zhao's seven points reviewed previously in the discussion of the CCP are intended to remove some of the deficiencies engendered by the current structure.

The preceding background provides a glimpse of the government and party structure in which Chinese managers pursue their careers. Two of the following career questions of managers within that structure are factual; the other two are individual managerial suggestions concerning their careers within the above-described system.

First Career Position

As with their U.S. counterparts, Chinese managers — at least in the sample for this study — began their careers in the area of Production/Operations. This is not unusual inasmuch as most of these managers represent manufacturing industries. Areas of less emphasis for first jobs include Law, Research and Development, and Computer/Information Systems. Sexes are about equal in beginning Production/Operations (males, 48.3 percent; females, 53.5 percent).

Current Career Position

Both Chinese and U.S. managers move from initial career positions to other areas, the former moving into General Management/Administration and U.S. managers into Marketing/Sales. A hypothesis occasionally given for the U.S. shift is that there is immediate visibility, employees in these areas receive immediate feedback on success or failure, and with success comes recognition from superiors.

Lack of mobility distinguishes the Chinese managers from their Asian and U.S. counterparts. For a long time (today there is a bit more flexibility) few Chinese were given a choice of career paths. They were instead told which area, which position, which enterprise needed workers. Hence, most managers in this study reflect positions assigned them as based on the perceived needs of central planning, for managers and the approximately 22 million youths (Engle, 1985) who enter the workforce each year.

Should high school students and those under age 25 elect to attend college via an entrance examination, the decision as to where they will work is delayed until after graduation. However, upon graduation, the State, in most instances, offers the graduate several options for work. Jobs are virtually guaranteed after graduation, but not necessarily in the area for which the student has prepared.

Fastest Route Up

When given a private choice, Chinese managers suggest that two career paths help get one to the top of an organization quickly: General Management/Administration and Political/Ideology. Then come the areas of Production/Operations and Marketing/Sales. While corporate law is minimal in the system and the use of computers is slowly gaining momentum, that may account for lesser interest in considering Law and Computer/Information Systems as an avenue for quickly moving up within an enterprise.

Significant is the managers' concept that the route to the top of an enterprise can be hastened when choosing a career path following the Political/Ideology pattern, discussed in some detail above. A quarter of the managers feel influence can be achieved through the Political/Ideology path. Thus they must be competent to be assigned by the government to a position and at the same time a good communist. Clearly, party and government overlap, both influencing business.

By contrast, U.S. managers opt for Marketing/Sales, then recommend Production/Operations as the fastest route to the top. About an equal percent of Chinese males (26 percent) and females (29.8 percent) suggest Ideology as the fastest route to the top.

Starting a Career Over

Nearly one-third of the Chinese managers — both male and female, and if they had the option — would begin their careers in General Management/Administration, where initially few began their careers. And as China modernizes and as managers recognize the impact of modern technology, one out of ten (13.5

percent) would focus on Computer/Information Systems. That choice — given before General Secretary Zhao's October 1987 speech, and wherein he stresses the need for increased emphasis on technology — reflects a present awareness of the need for modernity in business affairs.

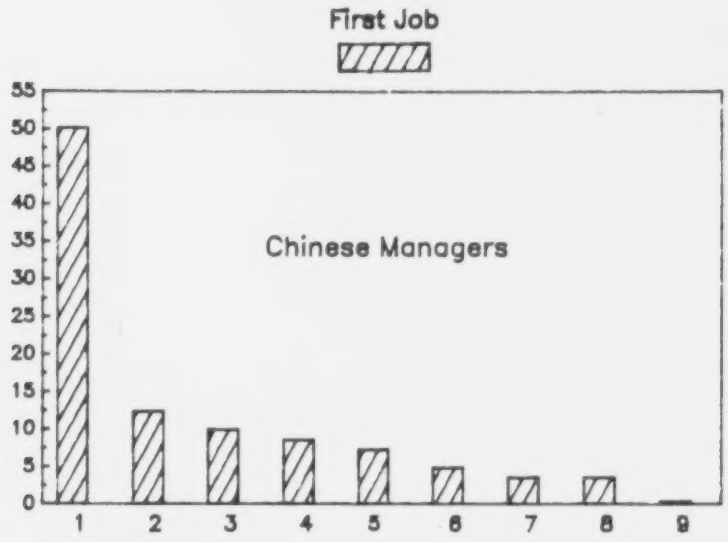
Not included in Table 4 is information on the Asian managers: they parallel closely their U.S. counterparts, particularly in emphasizing Marketing/Sales as the prime functional area to choose if starting over, the fastest route to the top, their current job, and their first job. With time, and as China expands its production, their managers and indeed central planners, could begin to stress areas promoting products rather than simply producing products.

Table 4
Career Patterns

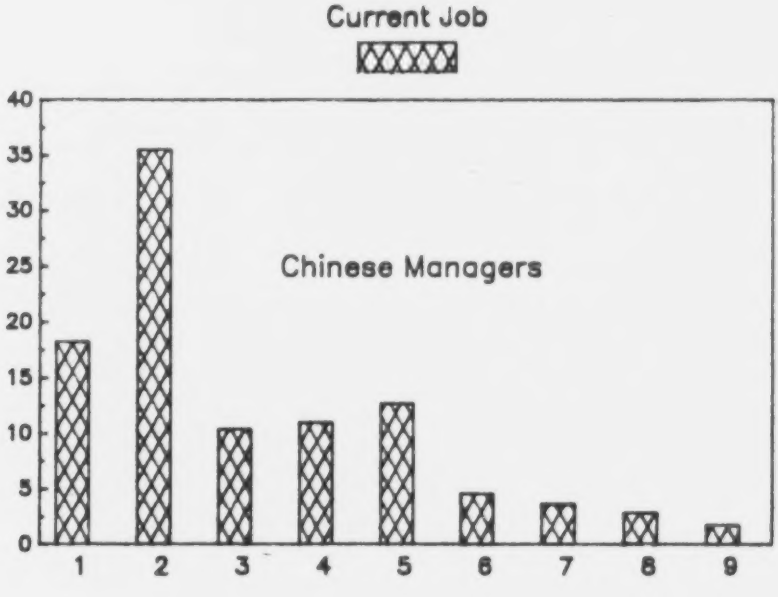
Functions	*First Job*	*Current Job*	*Fastest Route Up*	*If Starting Over*
Production/Operations	50.1 (25.0)*	18.2 (16.1)*	12.6 (19.7)*	10.3 (16.2)*
General Management/ Administration	12.3 (6.2)	35.5 (14.1)	32.4 (12.4)	32.6 (10.0)
Finance/Accounting	9.9 (11.9)	10.3 (8.4)	3.8 (8.4)	6.3 (9.6)
Marketing/Sales	8.5 (19.0)	10.9 (21.2)	11.3 (33.5)	10.3 (25.8)
Personnel	7.2 (8.3)	12.6 (20.1)	4.8 (10.3)	6.6 (13.4)
Political/Ideology	4.7 —	4.5 —	27.3 —	9.1 —
Computer/ Information Systems	3.5 (5.0)	3.6 (5.3)	2.0 (7.3)	13.5 (9.1)
Research and Development	3.5 (10.0)	2.8 (6.3)	4.1 (3.5)	6.0 (6.4)
Law	.3 (1.1)	1.7 (0.7)	1.7 (0.9)	5.3 (5.1)

*Percentages for U.S. managers are noted in parentheses.

Career Patterns—First Job



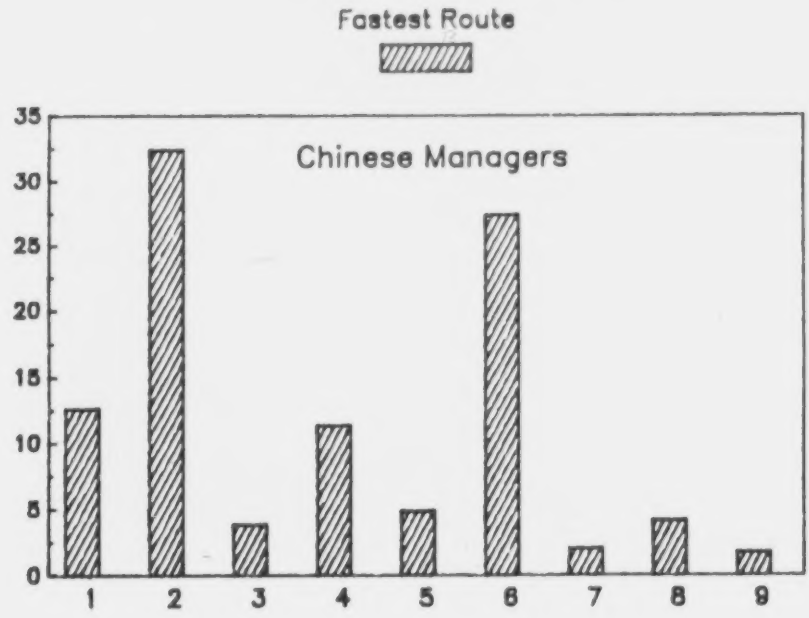
Career Patterns—Current Job



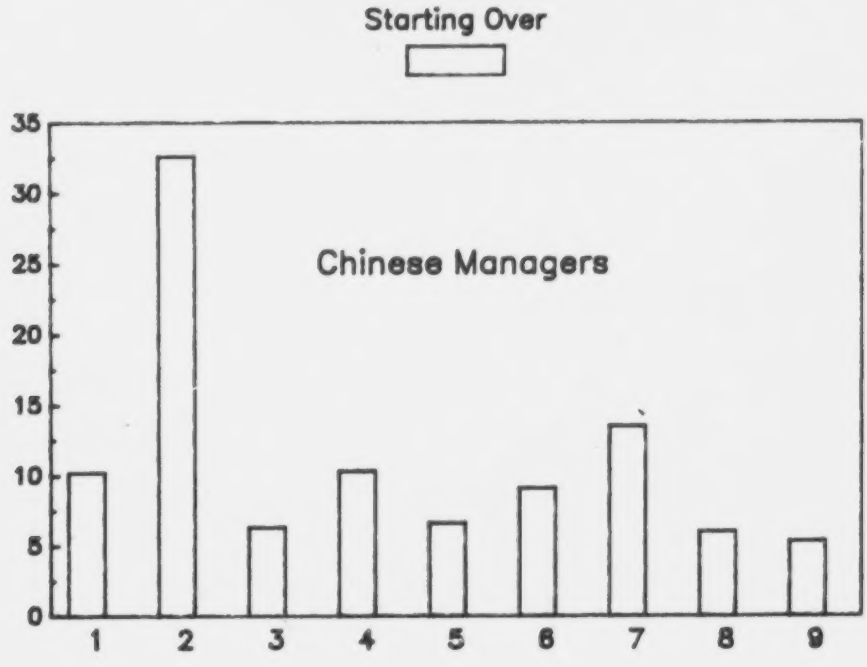
Legend

1. Production/Operations
2. Marketing/Sales
3. Finance/Accounting
4. Personnel
5. Research and Development
6. Law
7. General Management/Administration
8. Computer/Information Systems
9. Other

Career Patterns—Fastest Route



Career Patterns—Starting Over



6. Hours Worked Within a Week

The second major theme in General Secretary Zhao's October 1987 speech was the economy — which steps to take to improve the productivity of Chinese enterprises. While his approach was megaeconomics, at the level of hours worked per week Chinese managers are in their workplace longer than any of the U.S. and Asian managers, and only are a few hours shy per week of top-level U.S executives. These assertions need a bit more development.

(1). Chinese law mandates that workers work 8 hours a day, six days a week. Sunday, for most people, is the acknowledged day of rest.

(2). A minimum of forty-eight hours of work per week is required.

(3). Work hours are usually 8-12; 1-5. Managers may work more than 48 hours, but that is usually voluntary and without pay.

The Chinese managers thus are at their work positions more hours per week than their Asian and U.S. counterparts: 52.3 hours on average per week, or 4.3 hours more than their 48 mandated hours. U.S. managers work a mean 48.9 hours weekly, or 8.9 hours voluntarily beyond their usual 40 hour week. Asian managers are comparable with the U.S. managers. Regardless of whether the hours are mandatory or voluntary, Chinese managers devote more daily effort to work than other counterparts. Discussion is afoot to decrease both the number of days and the number of hours worked, specifically to institute a five-day work week; according to the International Labour Organization (ILO) that decrease means Chinese workers would still work approximately 2,032 hours a year compared with an average of 1,850 in the U.S. and 1,600 in West Germany. (Time Seems Ripe, 1988)

Several reasons may account for Chinese managers' relatively high number of work hours.

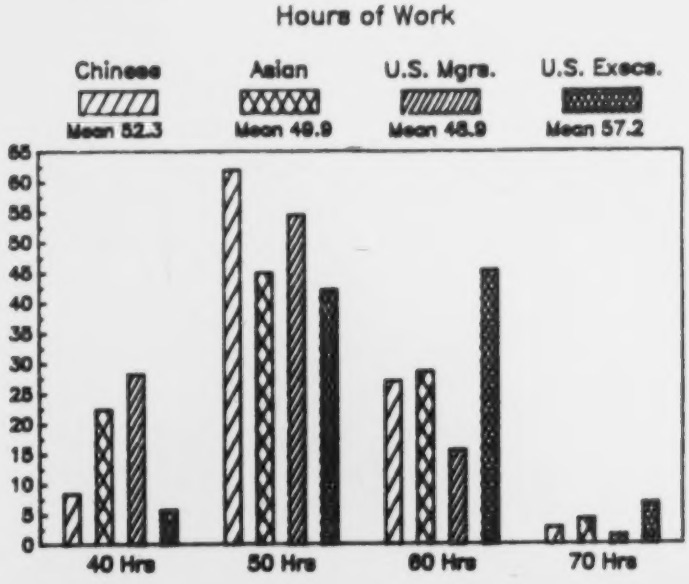
First, leaders of China acknowledge that productivity is distant from the levels experienced in more developed countries; it takes an inordinate amount of human time to accomplish tasks performed by machines (Goldman, 1986) in more technologically

developed countries. The large worker population permits huge numbers of employees to work on projects which elsewhere would consume less time. Efficient use of manpower, in other words, is lacking. A recent survey (Time Seems Ripe, 1988) suggests that workers are at their tasks only 19.2 to 28.8 hours a week. Some of the reasons for this actual work time is due to holdups of energy or raw material, to slow demand for products.

Second, regardless of the system, workers know that remaining at their task beyond the minimum number of hours, either voluntarily or on request of their superior will benefit them within the organization. There is the incentive to look well in the eyes of their superiors, not unlike situations in U.S. companies. Some of this additional time on the job may not be in actual work, rather on group activities organized by the Party.

Third, considerable time is also spent on political and ideological affairs. Additionally, managers spend time on matters such as their own and their employee's welfare: housing arrangements, education of employee's children, supply of foodstuffs, and other life-sustaining activities.

Thus the number of weekly work-hours is mandated, but with the informal understanding that additional hours would reflect favorably in the eyes of supervisors.



7. Formal/Informal Communication in the Workplace

To understand Chinese concepts of communication a background statement is needed. For many years British economics, politics, culture, ways of conducting business dominated Asia and Southeast Asia. Once the adage that "the sun never sets on the British empire" was no longer true, pervasive British influences on communication exchanges between companies and nations still continued. China was not immune from that influence and in its intercourse with Hong Kong helped perpetuate that dependence, even more vivid today as banking and trade and political discussions concerning 1997 continue between the two areas. British formal style and handling of substance continue in current Chinese communication patterns. Understanding this underlying communication foundation permits improved international communication to occur today.

Chinese managers support formal communication, as based on the definition supplied them in the questionnaire: highly structured channels, an emphasis on written reports, and formal sessions of decision-making.

Three points can be made. First, formally structured communication channels exist — not entirely unexpected in a planned economy — beginning with initial planning done by the Central Committee, then the Ministry, the Bureau, and finally the finished plan is presented to the enterprise. Along this channel each level attaches, for instance, its own mark or stamp — literally in red — attesting to an approval or amendment of the original State Planning Commission statement. Hence the hierarchy of the communication path has a built in formality, each level repeating or slightly amending the previously worded document. It is not unusual for a lower tier such as a factory to receive a final document with as many as five stamps thereon. While the West also has a hierarchial format, it is not so highly mandated as in China.

Second, such a formal path influences the format and tone of the documents sent through that channel: they are formal. Just over two-thirds (66.8 percent) of the managers thus indicate that formal communication is "very" or "somewhat" important. And the formal, British tradition continues in the colleges and universities where texts perpetuate formal business communication: (Zhu, 1979; Macintosh, 1982; Zhu, 1982); *English Business Communications*, 1983; *English Business Letters*, 1982; *Business Chinese*, 1982; *Business Dialogues*, 1983). Only slow inroads are being made (Zong and Hildebrandt, 1985) toward American Business English.

Third, equally important and some argue more so, is the concept of consensus or pluralism as part of China's version of communism. Western businesses are accepting of solo managerial decisions, after suitable input from various constituencies. It seems that at this time Chinese enterprises are not quite so willing to let one or two persons make a solo business decision; there appears to be a conscious, overt attempt to work collectively in committees to reach a decision through consensus. Accordingly, even when an individual has the right to make a decision, he or she employs the more formal method or sees the necessity for involving others in a consensus process. Arguably the consensus route takes longer, but the accepted formal method of group involvement takes considerable authority away from one individual.

Whereas 28.8 percent of the Chinese managers feel formal communication is "Very Important," only 15.5 percent give that rating to the informal modes, defined as telephone conversations or casual meetings. Surely there are the usual informal operation meetings for direction setting, but the overall emphasis is upon the formal. As the number of telephones increases in China, one can guess that the more casual approach will be used more.

In summary, formality in communication, influenced by the defined hierarchy of the system, dominates. Within that system then is transmitted communication in a highly formal manner. Section 10 discusses further implications of the Chinese concepts of communication.

EDUCATION LEVEL

Four sections make up this background discussion of the education attainments of Chinese managers. In a word, they are far less educated than counterparts from Asia and the U.S.

Five reasons are primary. First, China today does not have in relation to its size — in contrast to the United States — many institutions of higher education. In 1980 only 675 institutions for higher education were present, increasing to 902 in 1984, and by 1985 had reached 1,016. (*China Stat*, p. 13) The current government's emphāsis on education and training should, over time, increase the number of schools and institutes devoted to higher education. Indeed, the fact that half of China's governing body now have a college education (Butterfield, 1987) compared to previous leaders' peasant background with little education, suggests a massive commitment to both undergraduate and post-graduate education. (Limerick, Davis, Fitzroy, 1985)

Second, China for years was and according to some still is an agrarian economy. Over 800 million of the people still live in the countryside (Wu, January 18-24, 1988) and regardless of a nine-year compulsory education system few of the rural students are admitted to universities. A further breakdown suggests that the labor force is still predominantly agricultural, 69 percent in 1980, with industry 19 percent, and services 12 percent. (*World Development*, 1984, p. 258) Hence, not as much formal education for a rural economy was needed. That attitude is changing, however.

Accepting this last premise, along with *former leaders'* minimal interest in education, suggests that in the past there was little support for higher education. Western education was not needed in a dominantly agrarian economy, in a country which formerly looked internally rather than externally. In the past, new management ideas, new theories, new ways of entering an international market were of minimal use.

Indeed, some early leaders felt that as a result of the several wars in which China engaged, those war leaders could capably lead in such areas as the economy and industry. The pragmatic training of the battlefield was sufficient enough to lead an industry, thus, why establish educational institutions?

Third, during the period of the Cultural Revolution (1966 to 1976) most universities were closed; faculty were asked — perhaps demanded would be a better word — to leave their professorial positions and work in the countryside. Now is not the time to review the agonies of that professorial class, but the stories of servitude are a recitation of unpleasant experiences for the educated class, often in menial positions under the guidance of former students. Heart-warming stories were told to the American author of some students who returned, later, to professors and apologized profusely for their behavior. Some colleges did open after 1970, but many students attending were selected by their working unit, without benefit of an entrance examination.

Fourth, many qualified students could not attend class during the Cultural Revolution. If education did occur outside of the university, it occurred privately, often within the homes of those who waited for better times. Self-study replaced classroom learning. Access to books was for many their only contact with the world of learning.

Fifth, — except between 1977-80 — a lesser educated Chinese manager had to face the reality of a maximum age for taking a college entrance examination. Age 25 was the latest year in which a high school graduate, or anyone so interested, could take such an exam. Thus thousands of persons, shut out of college during the Cultural Revolution, possibly unable to study during that period, had the added burden of becoming older and often ill-equipped to pass an entrance examination for college.

In summary, our findings confirm what General Secretary Zhao alludes to in his October 1987 address, that there is a need to improve the educational level of Chinese managers. Today the attitude toward

education has changed, particularly visible as management seminars, programs, and institutes take steps to improve the managerial expertise of the Chinese manager.

8. Level of Education

Undergraduate

Thus it is obvious why so few managers are college educated, only 27.6 percent — Warner (1985) suggests two-thirds have few qualifications beyond middle school — receiving the equivalent of an undergraduate degree, many with engineering backgrounds. (Burstein, 1983, Butterfield, 1987) Contrastingly, and without the burden of being denied education or an imposed age limit, 65.4 percent of the Asian managers and 79.8 percent of the U.S. managers received an undergraduate degree. Such a startling difference suggests the great need for and General Secretary Zhao's interest in improving the education level of not only managers but the entire nation. As early as 1984 he offered these prescient remarks at the Sixth National Peoples' Congress, then as Premier:

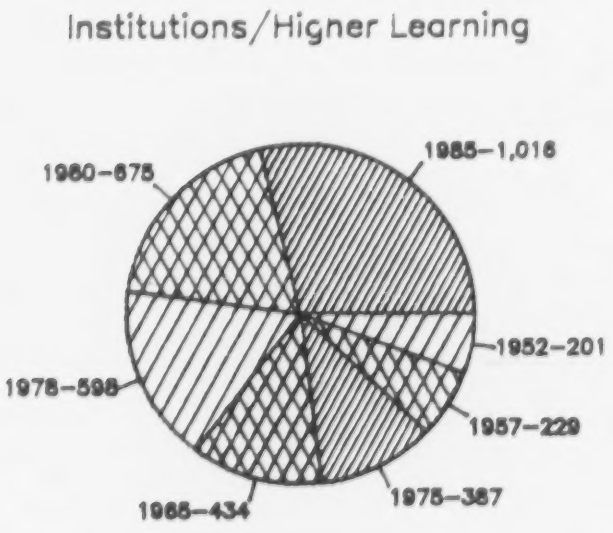
> [all] cadres engaged in economic work [should] conscientiously learn economic management and modern science and technology . . . [In addition] all enterprises and institutions should train their employees in a planned way. To obtain practical results the content and requirements of such training should vary with the posts and ages of employees. From now on, in recruiting workers and staff members, the enterprises must provide pre-job training for candidates and enlist those who have done well in examination. This is to ensure the quality of workers and staff, labour-discipline, production-safety and good condition of equipment in factories and mines (Warner, 1985, p. 75).

Post-Graduate

At the post-graduate level only .7 percent in the Chinese manager sample possessed an advanced degree. Three reasons are apparent:

(1). With the colleges closed during the Cultural Revolution there were few opportunities for advanced degree work. Post-graduate students, in some instances, joined their professors in rural areas. Anecdotal evidence suggests that some professors and their students convened secretly to continue learning, but this was accomplished without academic credit which in turn did not change the post-graduate requirements in a formal classroom.

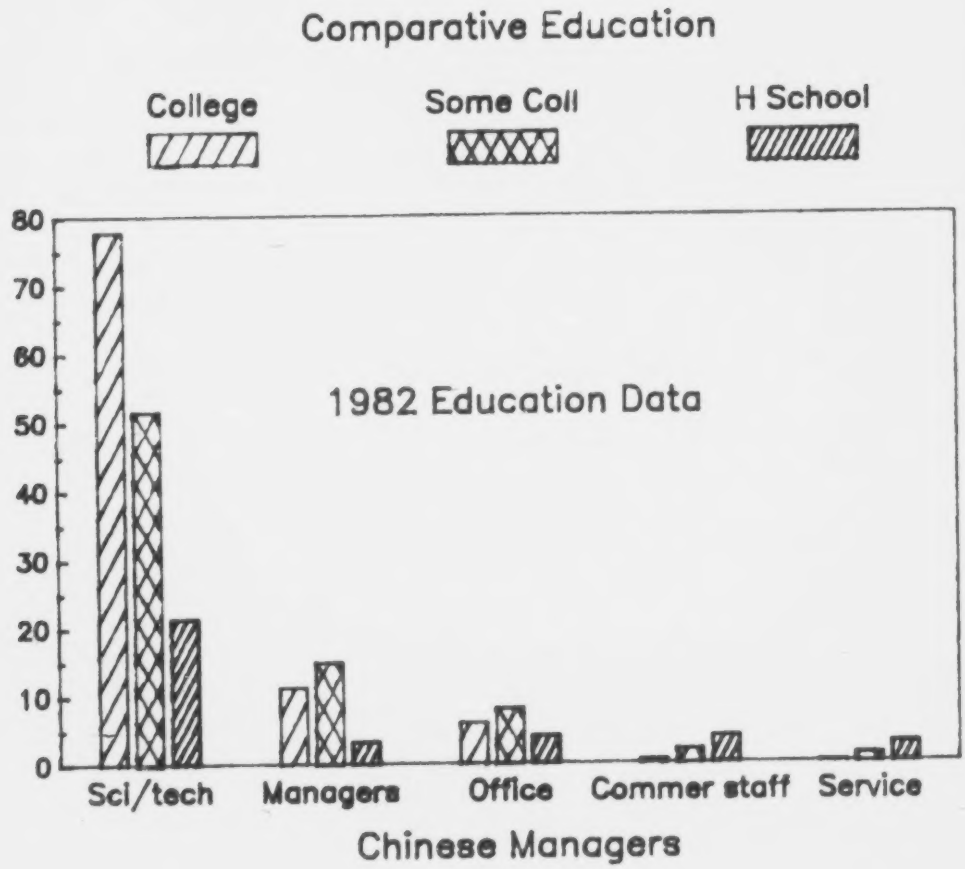
(2). There were and are comparatively few post-graduate schools in China. In 1962 (*China Stat*, p. 629) only 173 institutions offered post-graduate training (under rubrics as Institutions of Higher Learning; Chinese Academy of Sciences; Chinese Academy of Social Sciences; Ministries and Commissions; and Scientific Research Institutes of provinces, autonomous regions, and municipalities). That figure had increased to 740 institutions by 1985, of which 388 were labeled Institutions of Higher Learning.



(3). It follows that with comparatively few post-graduate schools there will be fewer students: 2,763 enrolled in 1952 and 87,331 in 1985 — compared with the 1,114,000 post-graduate enrollment in the U.S. in 1984 (*Stat Abst*, 1986) — suggesting that few Chinese post-graduate students would occupy managerial positions. In the current study only three managers indicated they had received an advanced degree. No precise figures are available for post-graduate courses of study, but using the undergraduate percentages suggests that 147,543 students in 1986 (*China Stat*, p. 630) studied economics and finance, traditional business subjects in China. Those persons holding a post-graduate degree are primarily in the schools and colleges, there teaching new students who in turn will educate other Chinese post-graduate students.

The large number of post-graduate Chinese studying abroad (c. 20,000 in the U.S. in 1987) along with a large number of Visiting Scholars, suggests that today the Chinese government strongly supports educating persons who will return to Chinese universities in professorial and most likely not managerial positions.

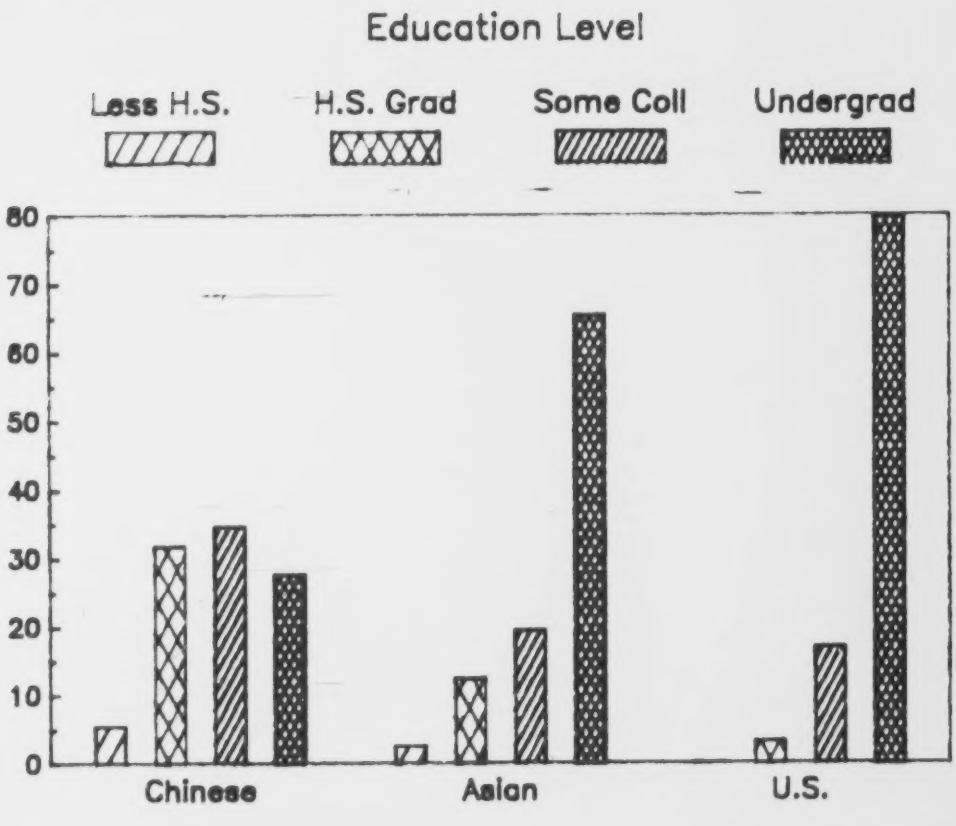
Information from the 3rd national census for China (*Statistical Data*, 1986) offers some interesting comparisons. Taking a look at only the category of "Managers of enterprises, institutions, and related working units," managers of those diverse units held only 8 percent of the total college degrees as compared with 29.8 percent for teachers and professors; 28.2 percent for engineers; 10.5 percent for doctors and health technicians; and 4.1 percent for staffs in administrative affairs. In fact the category of professionals held 77.8 percent of the total college degrees; the category of managers held 11.2 percent. In sum, at the moment most college educated persons in China are not in the managerial category, suggesting less awareness of modern managerial techniques, of production innovations, of personnel administration, of international trade policies, information one would learn about in management classes. A linear study of degree earners and managers will determine whether the degree percentages will change.



Comparative statistics for the Chinese, Asian, and U.S. managers' education levels are in seen in Table 5.

Table 5
Education Level

Level of Education	*Chinese*	*Asian*	*U.S.*
Less than H.S.	5.4%	2.5%	0.1%
H.S. Graduate	31.8	12.4	3.2
Some College	34.6	19.4	16.9
Undergraduate Degree	27.6	65.4	79.8
Post-Graduate Degree	.7	25.0	30.0



9. Recommended Fields of Study

Even though the data are negative concerning the lack of a higher education for Chinese managers, they are forthright when responding to the question: "For the student who plans to follow an undergraduate degree with post-graduate/professional study, what course of study would you recommend for an undergraduate major and for post-graduate work as the best preparation for a management career?"

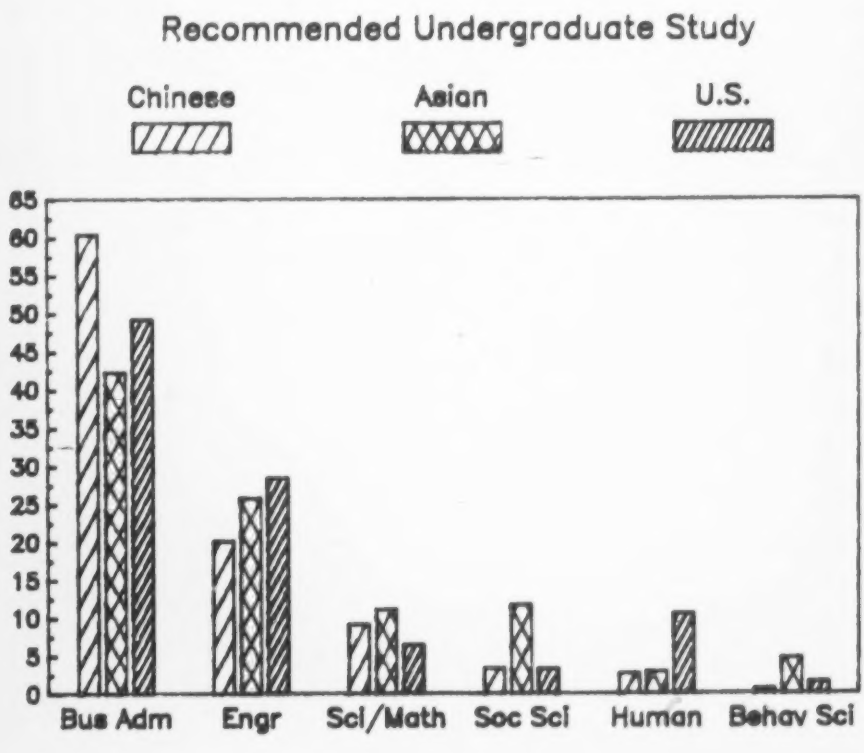
At the undergraduate level nearly two-thirds recommend Business Administration (60.4 percent), particularly courses in management administration (15.6 percent) then followed by Marketing/Sales (6.5 percent) and other courses (14.9 percent). Such a high percentage — higher than either the Asian or U.S. managers — illustrates a concern for first improving

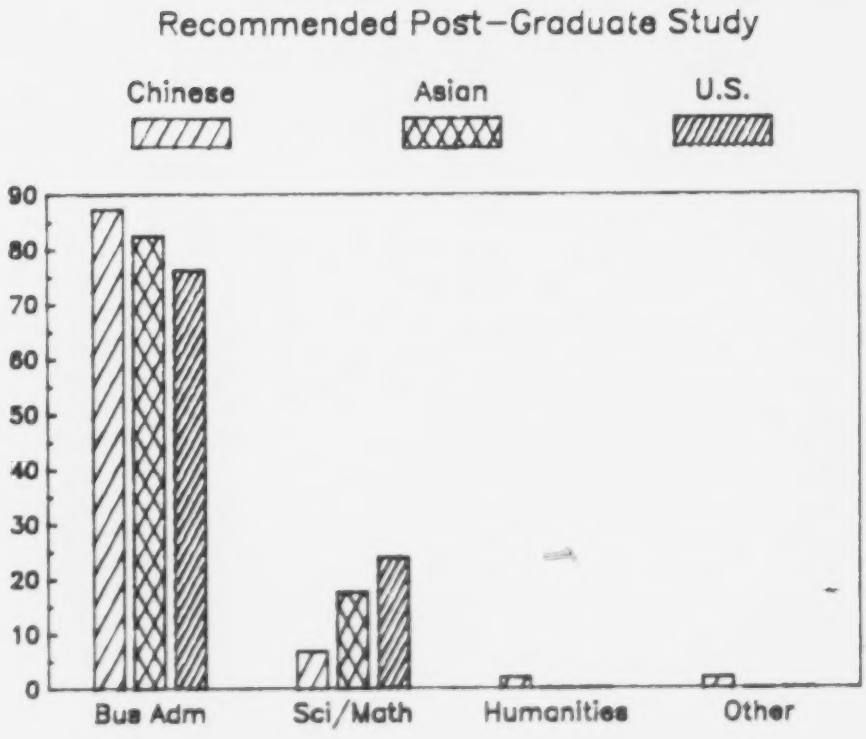
overall managerial skills, then turning to the area which markets and sells the product. They give lesser but at least some support for Accounting, Personnel Relations, and International Business.

High agreement between Chinese, Asian, and U.S. managers occurs at the post-graduate level: all overwhelmingly support post-graduate work in Business Administration, with second position going to Science and Mathematics.

Table 6
Recommended Fields of Study

Recommended Fields of Study	*Undergraduate*			*Post-Graduate*		
	Chinese	*Asian*	*U.S.*	*Chinese*	*Asian*	*U.S.*
Business Administration	60.4%	42.3%	49.2%	87.3%	82.4%	76.1%
Engineering	20.1	25.8	28.4	—	—	—
Science and Math	9.1	11.1	6.4	6.8	17.5	23.8
Social Science	3.3	11.7	3.2	1.0	—	—
Humanities	2.6	2.9	10.5	2.0	—	—
Behavioral Science	.6	4.7	1.5	—	—	—
Law	—	—	0.2	1.0	—	—
Other	3.9	1.1	0.6	2.0	—	—





10. Courses as Preparation

The presumption, as with the identical question asked of Asian and U.S. managers and executives, is that on reflection Chinese managers should be able to rank those courses which helped prepare them for their current managerial position. Some interesting parallels occur, and differences.

(1). Asian and U.S. managers rank oral communication as "most important" on a scale of 1-highest to 5-lowest, with means of 1.27 and 1.24 respectively. U.S. executives are about equal in their support, verified in many studies (Murphy, Hildebrandt, 1988) which offer support for communication as preparation for Manager/Executive competence. Chinese managers, as a group, position oral business communication dead last. Why?

Earlier it was suggested that formal communication (a firm emphasis on the written and formal channels) was the preferred mode of communicating a message through the many hierarchical levels, both Party

and government. But that appears not to be the main reason. Little argumentation, debate occurs within the present managerial system. In place of counter-arguments, central planning — at a much higher level within the structure, perhaps as high as the Ministry and Bureau level — has already recommended the direction for the enterprises. By the time a directive reaches the operations level within a factory there is general acceptance and less need for debating the merits of the decision. Assertiveness through oral communication is less needed. Many managers appear to serve primarily as conduits of information. (Fischer, 1986) Likewise, in a formal communication pattern emphasizing consensus, the hierarchy and ranking of the persons in the group predetermines who will speak and who will be influential. Managers may speak, but each knows his or her ranking in the hierarchy and the substantive weight their comments will or will not carry.

Such a passive and accepting attitude is culturally and politically fashioned. For instance, lecturing in a Chinese classroom is unlike the West where students willingly challenge, debate with their teacher. Not so in China. There students record, listen, accept quite silently the ideas and words of their instructor. Few would think of challenging the precepts for the day. It is not much different at university meetings. There, a young scholar says, "We don't discuss . . . there is a speaker. I have only to bring my ears." *(China's Campus Life*, p. A-48)

From childhood (Solomon, 1971, p. 49) there is imbued in the child protocols, "A strong sense of social status and authority thus develops around interpersonal communications, of who may speak first, who must listen, or who is left speechless." As mentioned above, that sense of rank order also pervades enterprise committees where many speak but not all are heard. Thus the classroom, and ultimately the role of oral communication at the managerial level, in great measure mirrors the cultural training received at home and in the larger society.

Hence a cultural heritage of not being too outspoken, or avoiding public confrontation, may influence the

low priority given oral communication as an important managerial preparation tool. In time it will be interesting to trace the variations in and deviations from this initial statement on oral communication.

Such an accepting attitude is also part of the political process — at least at the lower levels of an enterprise — of accepting, of listening, of following centrally planned principles of the Party and the government. Hence, if most planning and debate on an issue has occurred earlier, there is less need for a major emphasis on oral communication.

Furthermore, our experience in Chinese meetings parallels the observations noted by Lindsay and Dempsey (1985) where giving feedback, challenging others, questioning of others, and interruptions were mild or non-existent as compared with U.S. managerial meetings. If there was oral discussion, it was ritualistic: each person offered his or her opinions in the form of set speeches rather than in confrontation through debate. The end of the "discussion" occurred when the senior member of the group offered his opinion on the matter. Non-verbal reactions as head nodding or short oral approvals then occurred by some members of the group.

Similar arguments may be made for Written Communication. If a centrally planned system is in operation and a manager simply implements that policy, there is also less need to develop written communication skills. However, the fact that Chinese managers rank it higher than oral communication suggests a recognition that a major mode within all channels is the written word.

(2). Both males and females rank Finance and Marketing first and second in course importance. Electing Finance first is not surprising as Chinese managers increasingly are being given opportunities to make economic decisions. And as China looks outward and has contact with more foreign nations, some sense the need for selling products worldwide which at one time were produced for local consumption. That attitude demands competence in marketing, today being offered in Chinese management seminars.

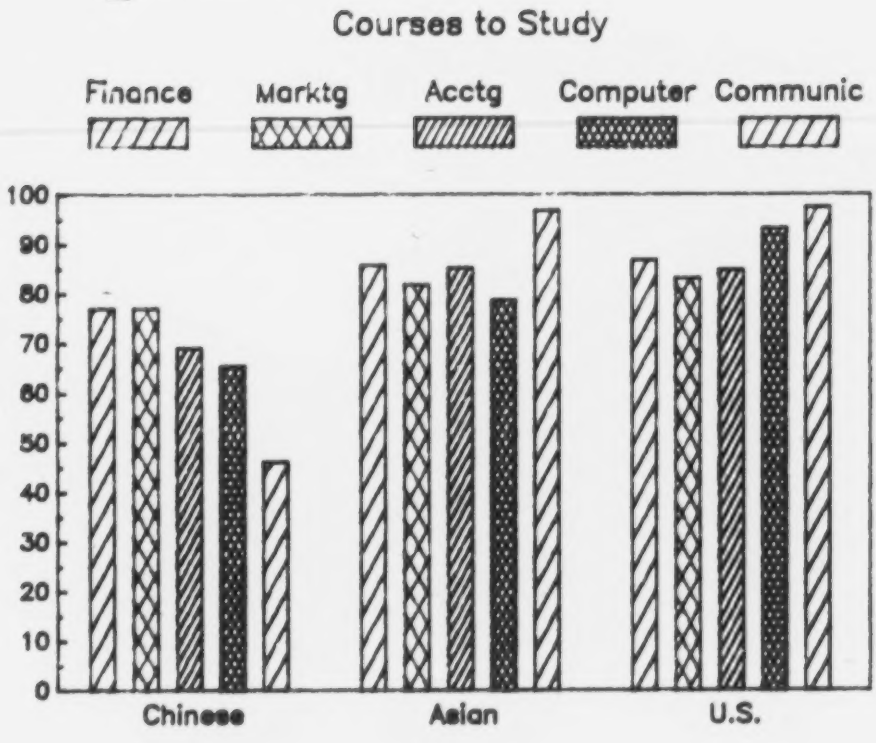
(3). Insularity along with central planning may also account for managers giving minimal support to courses as Production/Operations and Law. Accepting the principle of a self-sufficient economic model for China, there is not much need, some would argue, for knowing extensively the laws or procedures for international business. And with central planning overseeing production goals and products, this area too would not receive much support. But changes are occurring.

(4). Mathematics has often been applied to production problems in China (Chen, 1986), that along with the great number (580,168 in 1986) of students studying engineering, may contribute to why Chinese managers strongly support Statistics and Math (ranked low by both Asian and U.S. managers) and Computer/Information Systems. China missed the technological revolution (Goldman, 1986) along with corresponding fewer technicians (Torbert, 1984), thus the managers' support, either initiated through central planning or gleaned from technological laboratories (Orne, 1985), implies a concern for more modern measures and technological advances as aids to improved production.

Comparisons and ranking of other recommended courses are in Table 7: "Very Important," 1; through "Very Unimportant," 5.

Table 7
Courses to Study
(Means)

	Chinese				
Courses	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*	*Asian*	*U.S.*
Finance	1.95	1.97	1.91	1.78	1.75
Marketing	1.97	1.99	1.94	1.71	1.83
Accounting	2.09	2.09	2.10	1.95	1.81
Computer/Information Systems	2.18	2.17	2.18	1.91	1.54
Business Policy/Planning	2.18	2.20	2.15	1.66	1.64
Business Economics/Public Policy	2.18	2.12	2.31	1.87	1.90
Advertising/Sales Promotion	2.25	2.27	2.24	2.12	2.30
Statistics	2.25	2.25	2.23	2.40	2.27
Personnel/Labor Relations	2.29	2.30	2.25	2.11	1.81
Written Communication	2.38	2.32	2.48	1.30	1.25
International Business	2.51	2.48	2.56	2.05	2.59
Production/Operation	2.51	2.54	2.43	2.47	2.07
Law	2.54	2.50	2.61	2.14	2.03
Oral Communication	2.57	2.60	2.52	1.27	1.24



SOCIOLOGICAL PATTERNS

Data from this point to the end of the paper is more relevant to sociological and extrinsic patterns outside the workplace than the Chinese managers' careers within the workplace. We begin with their age.

11. Age

A presumption of the investigators was that the Chinese managers would on average be older than either U.S. or Asian managers. That is somewhat true. China's population overall has a median age of 22.9; (*China Stat*, p. 81) with the Chinese managers obviously older at a median age of 39.0. Female managers are younger (mean of 36) than the males' 40.3. Those mean ages are among the highest for economically active ages in China at 98.7 percent of the males and 88.5 percent of the females as summarized in United Nations statistics (*Demographic Yearbook 1984*, p. 518)

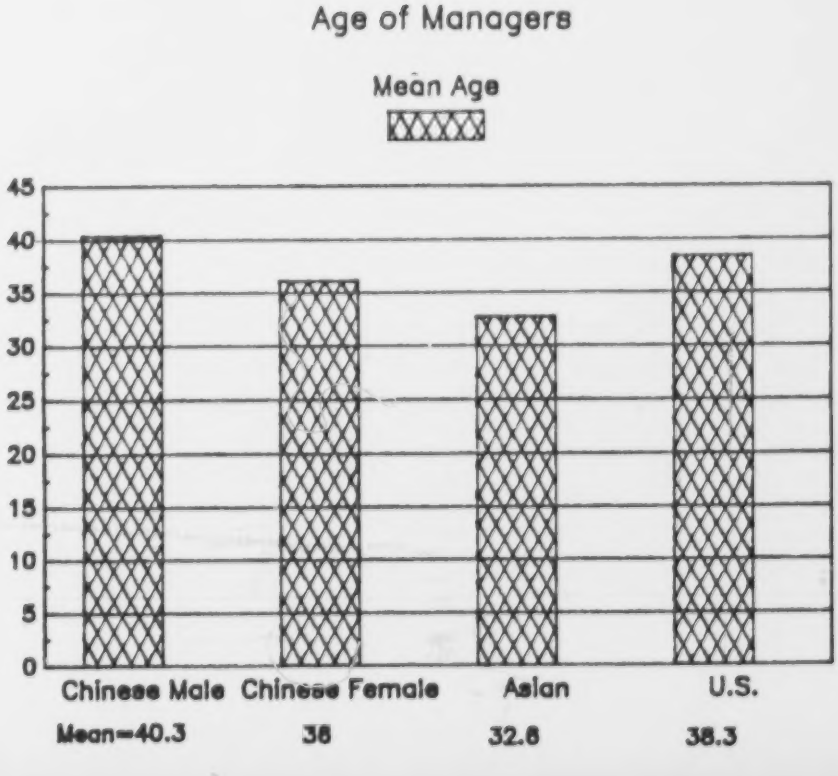
U.S. managers had a mean age of 38.3 and Asians 32.5.

As stated, Chinese women managers in this study are, on average, 4.3 years younger than their male counterparts, similar to U.S. female managers who are 4.7 years younger (mean of 34.7) than the males.

What is not included in the Chinese age data are two imposed legalities: Chinese males must retire at age 60 and females at age 55. That has little affect on overall comparisons because few U.S. or Asian managers are older than 60. Simply for comparative purposes, most Asian managers wish to retire at age 58.2, the mean, and U.S. managers at age 59.8, the mean, quite similar to the imposed retirement ages of the Chinese managers.

Table 8
Age in Years

	Chinese			*Asian*	*U.S.*
	Total	*Male*	*Female*		
Mean	38.8	40.3	36	32.6	38.3
Median	39	41	34	32.5	38



Retirement Ages

	Chinese		*Asian*		*U.S.*	
	Male	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*
Required	60	55	—	—	—	—
Desired (Mean)	—	—	59.7	50.8	59.8	59.4

12. Sex

In the current study males (65.3 percent) dominate the managerial ranks in China as they do in the U.S. and Asian studies. The percentage of Chinese women managers (34.7 percent) is insignificantly lower when compared to the 35.6 percent of U.S. working women described as executive, administrative, and managerial (*Stat Abst*, p. 385). China's total female workforce is 36.4 percent. Beijing, the leading city for the respondents for this study include *in total* 40.7 percent working women; Shanghai 41.8 percent; Liadning 40.9 percent; and Tianjin 41.8 percent (*China Stat*, p. 103)

13. Order of Birth

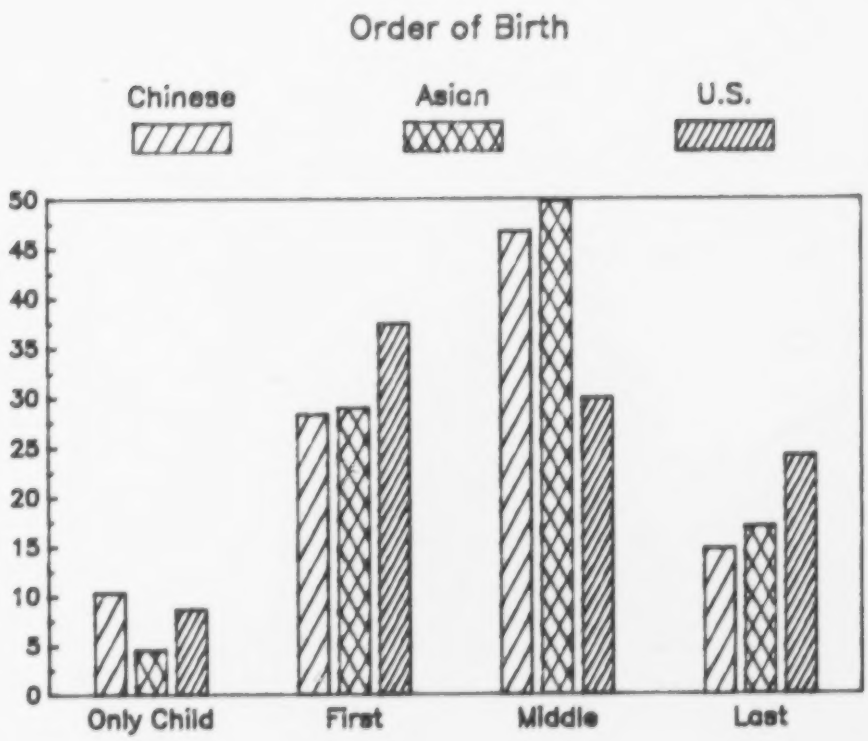
First-born children in China and in other Asian countries — at least before the imposed one-child rule for Chinese couples — have a traditional responsibility: they assist in working for the mutual benefit of the family. Pooling of incomes, from children and other wage earners, was not uncommon. Thus the first child on completion of either a rudimentary education or a minimal high school education began to support the family unit.

Children after the first-born had a better chance for education and breaking away, even more so within the past five years as China undergoes a sociological change. Data for the study suggests that 46.7 percent of the Chinese managers were middle children. That statistic is strikingly different from U.S. managers where only 29.9 percent were in that category,

but close to the Asian 49.7 percent where the first-born child is also expected to help the family. Of the U.S. executives only 23.4 percent were middle children while 41.4 percent were first-born.

Table 9
Order of Birth

Birth Order	*Chinese*	*Asian*	*U.S.*
Only Child	10.3	4.5	8.6
First	28.3	28.9	37.4
Middle	46.7	49.7	29.9
Last	14.7	16.9	24.1



14. Parents' Dominant Occupation

Before viewing the parents' occupation of the managers, some background remarks are in order. Since 1949 — the beginning of communism in China — the concept of everybody working undergirded central planning, and at the same time gave overt support

for decreasing discrimination against women in the workforce. The phrase "to eat, one must work" was a familiar saying of Mao, one which therefore took women from the home and put them into the workplace.

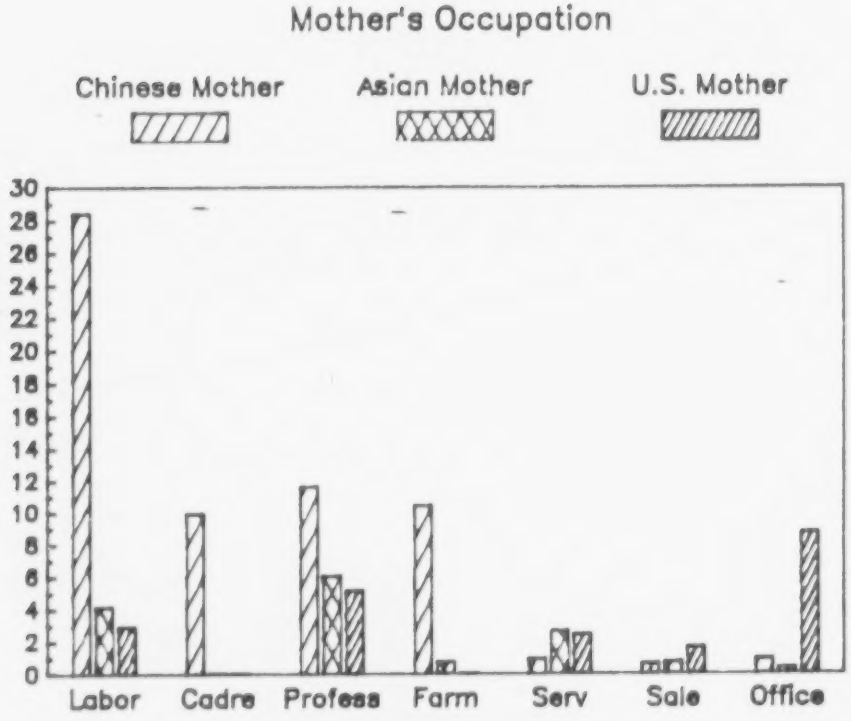
Mothers of Managers

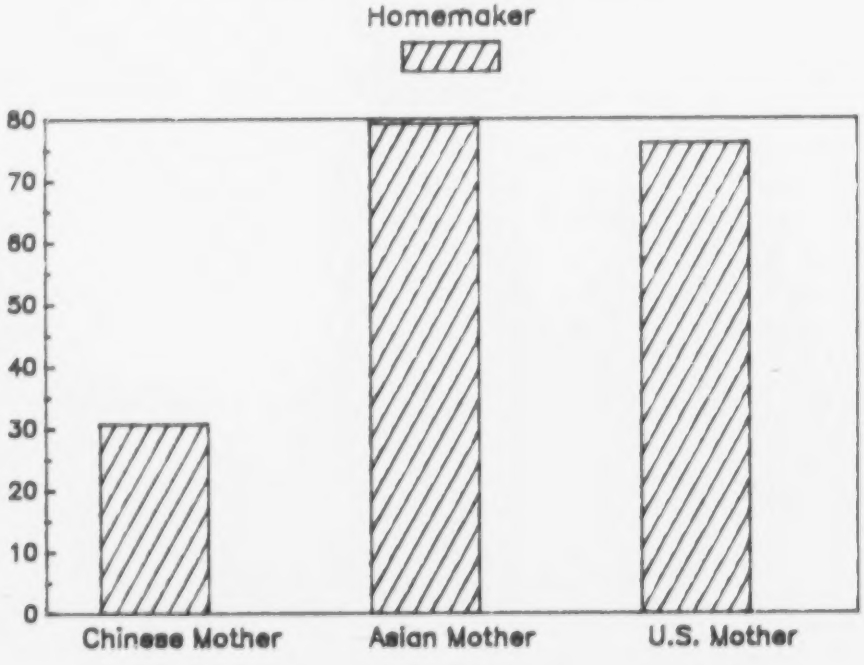
That concept of everyone working may contribute to only 30.7 percent of the Chinese managers' mothers remaining in the home as homemakers. While for Chinese mothers that still is the largest category, it does not approach the 70 percent of U.S. managers whose mothers were predominantly homemakers nor the 79 percent of the Asians.

The younger the Chinese managers the greater the number of their mothers out in the workforce. Conversely, the older — 86.7 percent of those aged 40-55 — managers' mothers' dominant position was that of homemaker; those mothers who did work outside the home worked primarily as laborers. In other words, as the philosophy of everyone working was accepted by the younger generation, more women (mothers) joined the workforce, a characteristic becoming more and more common in the U.S. and in Asia as well.

In the U.S. many mothers work because of the additional family income. We are convinced that Chinese mothers work because the government encourages them to do so and philosophically requires it. In an extended Chinese family — at least three generations living within the same home — the grandparents take care of the children, or child.

After homemaker come occupations as laborer, professional, and farmer. More Chinese mothers worked in this latter category (10.4 percent) than either the mothers of Asian (.7 percent) or U.S. managers (0 percent). The reason is clear. First, Chinese women undertook more jobs in agriculture — even as early as 1930 — (Johnson, Parish, Lin, 1987) as men left the farm to work in the cities, and second because China was at the time of the managers' birth a predominantly agricultural country. Few of the mothers worked in service industries, as skilled craftsmen, or in sales positions.


Mother's Occupation
Chinese Mother
Asian Mother
U.S. Mother
30
28
26
24
22
20
18
16
14
12
10
8
6
4
2
0
Labor
Cadre
Profess
Farm
Serv
Sale
Office


Mothers as Homemakers
Homemaker
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
Chinese Mother
Asian Mother
U.S. Mother

Fathers of Managers

Most fathers of the Chinese managers in the study were laborers (29.6 percent), predictably more characteristic of the older managers (age 40-55) than their younger colleagues.

Second in order of paternal occupations (23.9 percent) is entitled "cadre," a designation not existing in the U.S. but somewhat equivalent to Officials/Managers. Other Asian countries studied also do not have the classification of cadre, hence a clarification is needed.

Simply put, cadre is a person or group belonging to the ruling elite, holding a leadership post (Saich, 1981, p. 132) as distinguished from the masses of people, most of whom are termed noncadre.

> In its broadest usage, it includes all those, both Party members and non-Party members, who hold any post as a functionary in the bureaucratic hierarchies in China, from top to bottom. The term implies roles of leadership and authority, but over the years it has been applied to an increasingly large number of people, so that now even those in low-level functionary posts are labeled "cadre." (Barnett, 1967, p. 39)

At the moment the entire cadre system is under review in China. Even the Deputy Party Secretary of Hebei Province (*People's Daily*, December 12, 1987) supports the too broad a concept of cadre as stated by General Secretary Zhao in his October, 1987 speech:

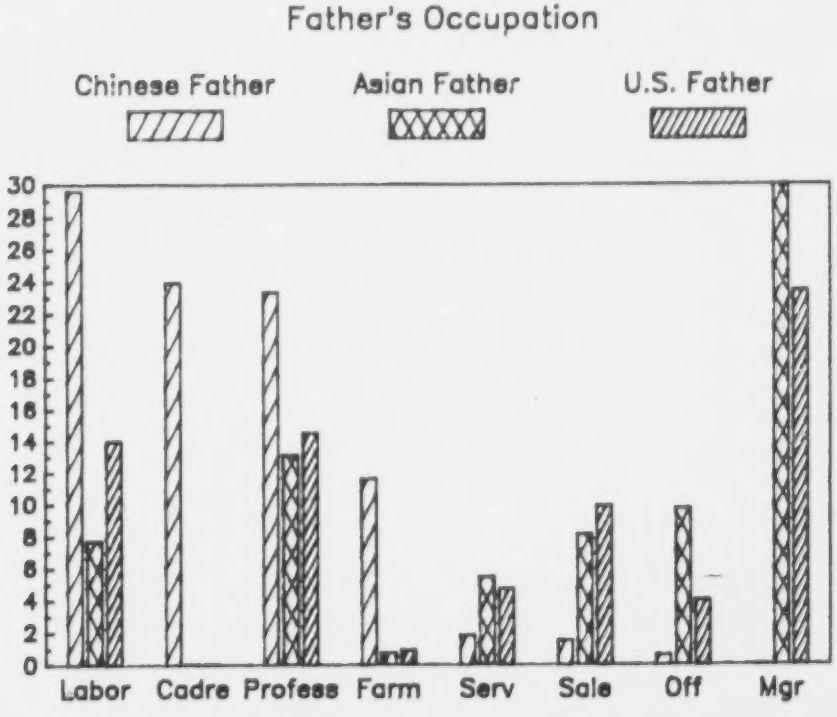
> The concept of the "state cadre" is too general and lacks a scientific classification; the power of cadre management is overconcentrated and the people who handle personnel affairs lack professional knowledge . . . To reform the personnel system relating to cadres we must alter the single category of "state cadre" and convert the current unified central management into a scientific system of management by establishing a number of categories. (Zhao, 1987)

That background is included because there are currently 27 million cadre (*Peoples' Daily*, November 19,

1987), with over ten million in education, health sciences, and technology; ten million as managers in state enterprises; four million in government positions; 350,000 in legal affairs; and the remainder in other areas.

Thus 16.4 percent of all the Chinese managers' fathers fit somewhere in the cadre classification, in some managerial responsibility either as Party or non-Party members. Inevitably, one can see the potential for misuse: cadre placed in positions of power because of Party loyalty rather than functional competence. That dichotomy was early recognized by Deng when in 1980 he suggested that "being expert certainly does not mean being red; however, to be red, it is also necessary to be expert." (Saich, 1981, p. 133) In other words, expertise should be a prime criterion for holding the title of cadre and the position of managerial leadership.

Third in order of paternal occupations was the category of professionals — engineers, teachers, doctors — with not quite a quarter (23.3 percent) falling into that group. Younger managers also have their fathers from that category, as is the case with both U.S. managers' fathers (15.6 percent) and Asian fathers (13.1 percent).



One could hypothesize that in a society devoid of extensive technological opportunities and little education to prepare for such positions, the high percentage of Chinese fathers who are laborers is not surprising. In time it will be interesting to see whether the educational reforms contemplated for China will change the occupational background of the parental home.

Table 10
Parental Occupation

Predominant Occupation	*Chinese*		*Asian*		*U.S.*	
	Father	*Mother*	*Father*	*Mother*	*Father*	*Mother*
Laborer	29.6%	28.4%	7.7%	4.1%	14.0%	2.9%
Cadre	23.9	9.9	—	—	—	—
Professional	23.3	11.6	13.1	6.0	15.6	5.1
Farmer	11.6	10.4	1.6	.7	.9	—
Service	1.8	.9	5.4	2.6	4.7	2.4
Sales	1.5	.6	8.1	.7	9.9	1.6
Technician	.9	1.8	8.7	—	5.0	.3
Office/Clerical	.6	.9	9.7	.3	4.0	8.7
Homemaker	.6	30.7	1.0	79.2	.3	76.0
Officials/Managers	—	—	30.0	3.0	23.4	1.3

15. Marital Status

Almost the identical percentage of Chinese male managers (77.9 percent) are in their first marriage as are Asian (73.1 percent) and U.S. male managers (77.2 percent). That 70 percent area remains consistent with Chinese female managers as well, 72 percent of whom are in their first marriage. A major shift occurs among Asian and U.S. female managers where only 44.2 percent and 42.9 percent respectively are in their first marriage. A minuscule number of Chinese and Asian managers are in their second marriage compared to one out of ten U.S. managers.

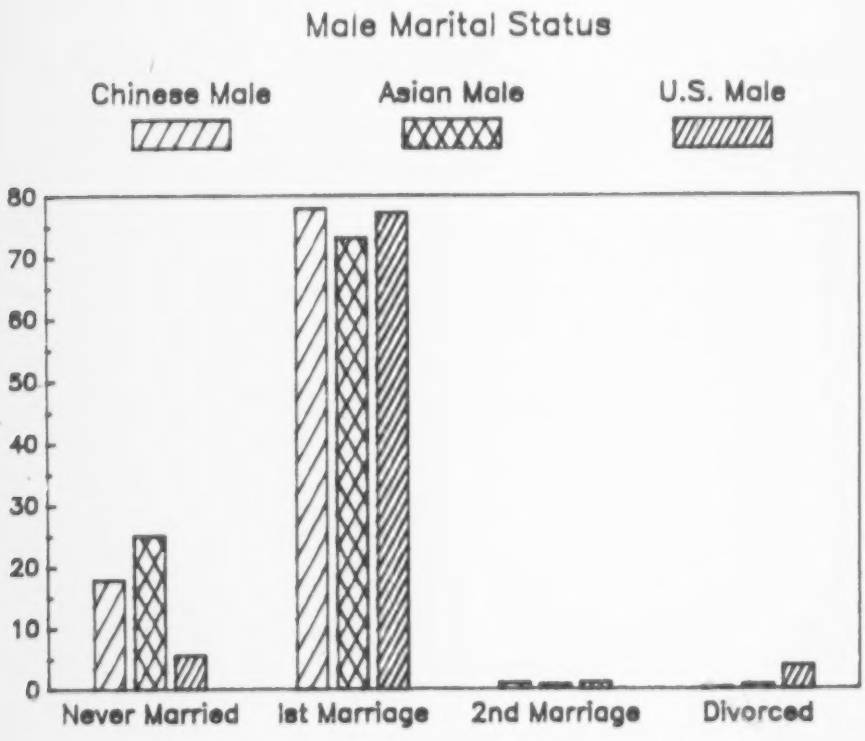
Just over a quarter (26 percent) of Chinese female managers have never married, that percentage quite parallel with their U.S. counterparts (24.5 percent). A high percentage of the Asian female managers (49.1 percent) have not married. Reasons often given include lack of housing space or possibly too great a

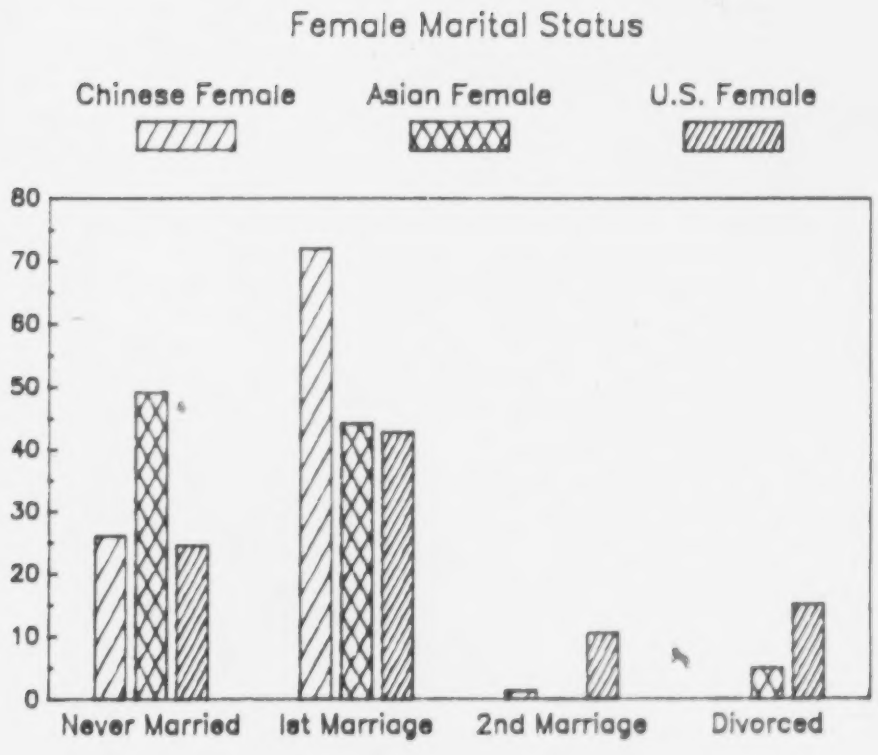
disparity in wealth and background between potential couples discourages marriage.

A Chinese saying is, "Your family's house-gate should be the same size as your spouse's family house-gate," symbolizing an attempt for equality. Furthermore, the sociological fact that over 80 percent of the female managers are over age 30, may suggest this is a more difficult time for contemplating marriage. Some distances are breaking down in the area of education, however. Other comparative figures are in Table 11.

Table 11
Marital Status

	Chinese			*Asian*		*U.S.*	
	Total	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*	*Male*	*Female*
Never married	20.9	17.8	26.0	25.0	49.1	5.5	24.5
1st marriage	75.6	77.9	72.0	73.1	44.2	77.2	42.9
Separated	.9	1.4	—	—	1.6	1.0	2.3
2nd marriage	.9	.7	1.3	.6	—	10.8	10.5
Divorced	.2	.4	—	.6	4.9	3.8	15.1
Widowed	.9	1.4	—	—	—	.1	.9



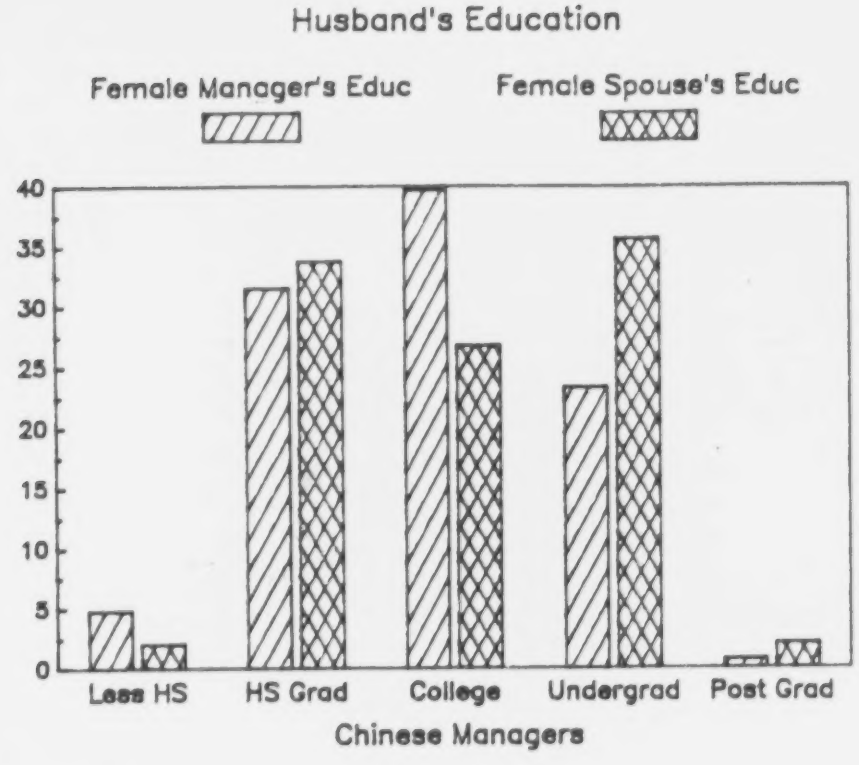


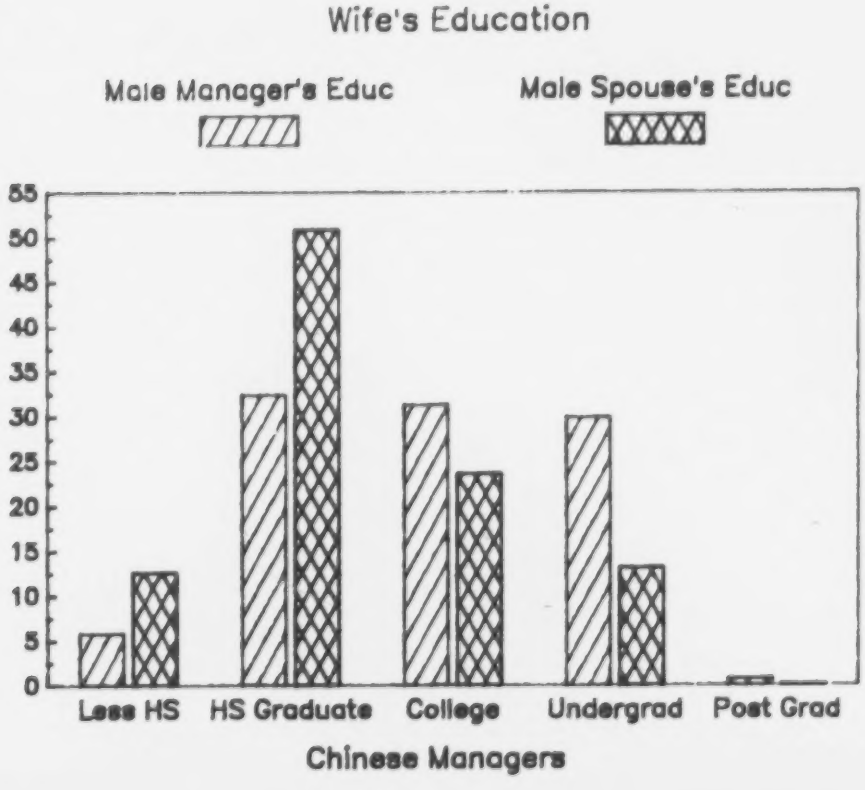
Concomitant to the preceding observations is the fact that 96.7 percent of the managers' spouses are employed full-time, 2.1 percent part-time, and only 1.2 percent are not employed at all. While fewer U.S. managers' spouses work (40 percent), they work to supplement the family's income, which may be a secondary reason in China where the "everybody should work" philosophy is dominant.

Male managers are at the college level slightly more educated than their spouses; the inverse at the same level is true of female managers' spouses, as seen in Table 12.

Table 12
Spouse's Level of Education

	Male Manager's Education	*Male Spouse's Education*	*Female Manager's Education*	*Female Spouse's Education*
Less than H.S.	5.8	12.6	4.8	2.0
H.S. graduate	32.4	50.8	31.5	33.7
Some college	31.3	23.6	39.7	26.7
Undergraduate degree	29.9	13.1	23.3	35.6
Post-graduate degree	.7	—	.7	2.0

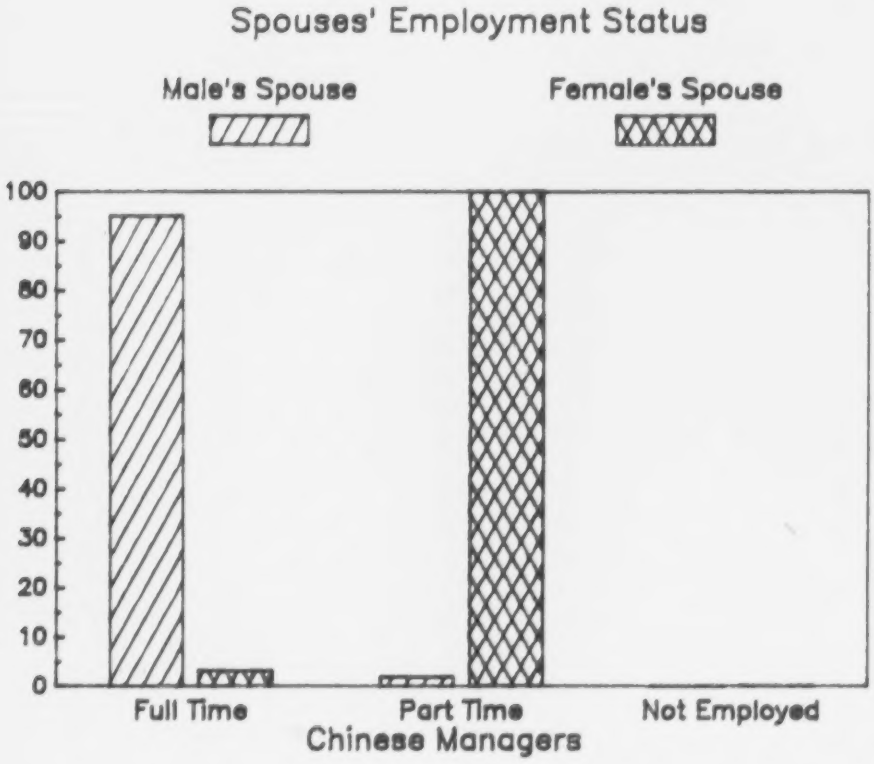

Husband's Education
Female Manager's Educ
Female Spouse's Educ
40
35
30
25
20
15
10
5
0
Less HS
HS Grad
College
Undergrad
Post Grad
Chinese Managers

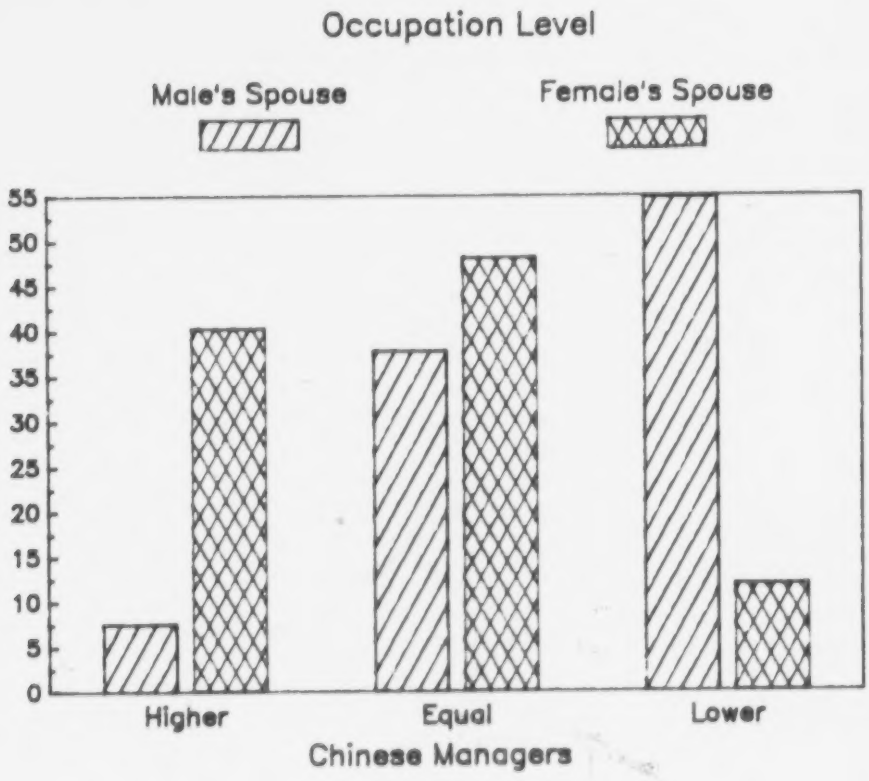

Wife's Education
Male Manager's Educ
Male Spouse's Educ
55
50
45
40
35
30
25
20
15
10
5
0
Less HS
HS Graduate
College
Undergrad
Post Grad
Chinese Managers

All female managers' spouses are employed full time, with those spouses in a higher level occupation 40.2 percent of the time and at an equal level 48 percent of the time. Those male managers' spouses employed full-time (95.1 percent) in most instances are lower or equal in occupation position. Comparisons are in Table 13.

Table 13
Occupation Level of Manager's Spouse

	Level of Occupation		*Employment Status*		
	Male's Spouse	*Female's Spouse*		*Male's Spouse Employed*	*Female's Spouse Employed*
Higher	7.5%	40.2%	Full time	95.1%	100.0%
Equal	37.7	48.0	Part time	3.1	—
Lower	54.8	11.8	Not employed	1.8	—





LIFESTYLE CHARACTERISTICS

A positive conclusion concerning China's health as a whole is that life expectancy (*Improving Health Care*, 1985; Simon, 1985) along with intensive efforts at improving occupational health (Christiani, 1984) continues to improve. Life expectancy improved to age 65 for males in 1982 and for females to age 69. (*World Development*, 1984, p. 262) As based on the analysis of Simon (1985), since the mid-1950s the life expectancy has risen fully 20 years, to the high 60s. A concomitant to this favorable observation is a negative: according to insurance monitors (*Improving Health Care*, 1985) cancer, stroke, and heart diseases are becoming more prevalent. Indeed, recent statements in the *Peoples' Daily* (December 17, 1987) suggest that life-threatening diseases are on the increase in China. For instance, in 1974 workers diagnosed as having heart disease were 2.3 percent, in

1980 3.9 percent, and in 1982 had risen to 4.3 percent. Some of the health related concerns in our study of Chinese managers are singled out by the Chinese author as potential causes:

— Increase in life expectancy
— Increase in blood pressure
— Improper nutrition along with increased cholesterol level
— Smoking habits
— Environmental factors; type "A" personalities
— Sedentary occupations; middle-aged and educated persons involved in little exercise

Fortunately, the number of Western (doctors trained in Western medical methods) and Chinese doctors (doctors trained in Chinese traditional methods, possibly with no M.D. degree) also continues to increase, from 1.244 million in 1981 to 1.440 million in 1986 (*China Statistical Handbook*, 1987).

With that background, our purpose is to compare the Chinese managers on a series of lifestyle measures with selected U.S. counterparts. Because most of the Chinese managers came from Beijing, an urban area, such a profile must be borne in mind when reading the following description.

The Physical Fitness Research Center of The University of Michigan has for several years completed "Health Risk Appraisals" of U.S. firms. Currently that data base exceeds 200,000 employees, as based on responses to over 300 health-related questions. Out of that data base were selected employees — many at the managerial level — on the basis of age, sex, and education who came closest to the Chinese managers. Using that criteria 8,720 U.S. managers were matched with the Chinese. Occasionally, some comments on stress and its relationship to lifestyles will be included.

16. Lifestyle Age

Some definitions are needed. Managers, in fact all persons, can be described in terms of three kinds

of health risk ages: chronological, appraised, and achievable.

Chronological: This description is the most commonly understood and is based on the day of one's birth.

Appraised risk age: This is a computation founded on the basis of completed health risk questionnaires, calculating the known relationships between lifestyle habits, and the chances of dying as a result of those desirable or undesirable health habits.

Achievable age: This definition is the risk age he or she could possibly attain if certain recommended changes in lifestyle habits would occur.

If the Chinese managers accepted and then implemented desirable lifestyle changes, their risk of dying would be equal to age 33.8, or, 5 years less than their mean chronological age of 38.8. In other words, some current lifestyle habits and inherited illnesses (smoking, drinking, lack of exercise — to be discussed later), are considered undesirable, and in turn influence one's appraised and achievable ages.

Regardless of the cultural and lifestyle differences between the U.S. and China, the Chinese managers' projected death rate per 1,000 persons over the next 10 years was 4.1 years less than the U.S. sample.

Additional comparative statistics are in Table 14.

—

Table 14
Risk Assessment

	Chinese Managers	*U.S.*
Average Risk Age		
Actual/chronological	38.8	38.9
Appraised	38.4	37.1
Achievable	33.8	33.8
Projected Death Rate Death per 1,000 persons over next 10 years (all causes)		
Actual/chronological	51.6	55.7
Appraised	56.3	52.1
Achievable	34.5	38.8
Projected Death Rate Death per 1,000 persons over next 10 years (heart disease)		
Actual/chronological	15.9	17.0
Appraised	22.3	14.0
Achievable	5.6	6.1
Projected Lifespan		
Age-predicted	78.2	78.3
Risk-related	78.2	79.2
Achievable	82.9	83.0

17. Health-Related Behaviors

Smoking Habits

A visitor to China, absent any statistical input, would infer that Chinese as a whole, and managers particularly, smoke more than their counterparts in the U.S. Indeed, over one-third (35.9 percent) of the Chinese managers smoke an average of 17.1 cigarettes daily as compared with U.S. managers, 21.3 percent of whom smoke an average of 21.6 cigarettes daily. Few Chinese smoke cigars or pipes, the suggested reason being it is too costly and the taste too strong.

Conversely, while many Chinese managers smoke today 53.9 percent never smoked at all; in the U.S. reference sample 47 percent never smoked.

Concerns about smoking are slowly beginning to appear in China, denying such behavior in places as the Beijing railway station and some libraries. It will be interesting to see whether Chinese managers will decrease their smoking in the future as potential health problems become more known.

Drinking Habits

Nearly half (49.1 percent) of the Chinese managers in this sample drink — either beer, wine, or hard liquor. That statistic is similar to the U.S. reference sample, 53.5 percent of whom drink. Of the three categories, beer is the popular beverage among the Chinese for three reasons; it is cheaper, more readily available, and not as potent as liquor, accounting in part for them consuming a mean 8.1 bottles per week.

Persons interviewed in conjunction with the questionnaire suggest they smoke and drink to relieve both boredom and tension of the job, not unlike reasons given by other nationalities. It is not unusual for the Chinese manager to react the same as his U.S. counterparts, at the end of the day enjoying a drink and cigarette, most often in the privacy of his home. The pronoun "his" was deliberate; 67.7 percent of the male Chinese managers drink as opposed to only 24.1

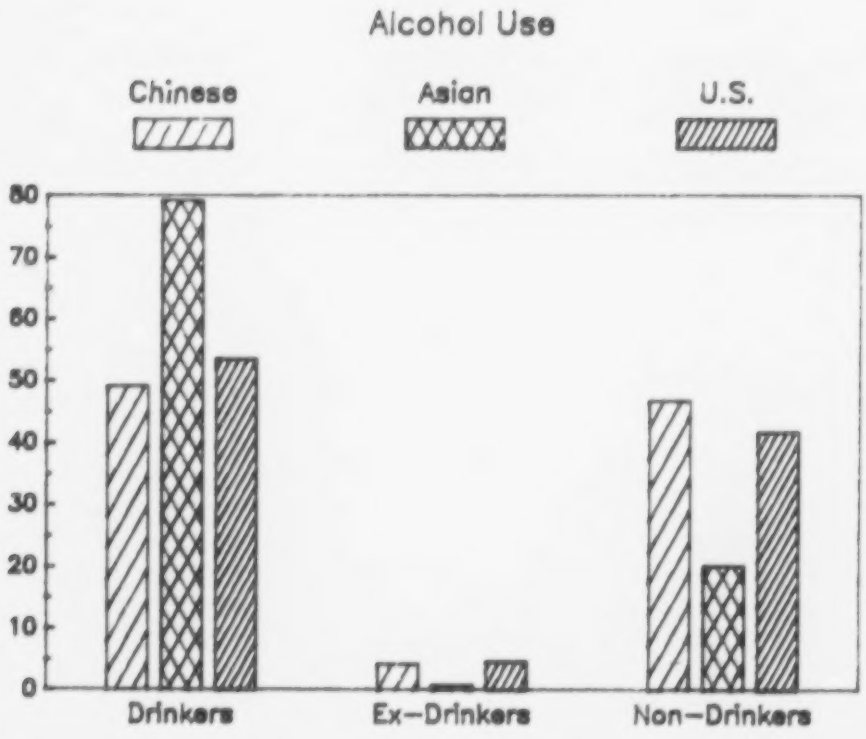
percent of the females. Considerably more U.S. female managers drink (56.4 percent) than their Chinese counterparts (24.1 percent).

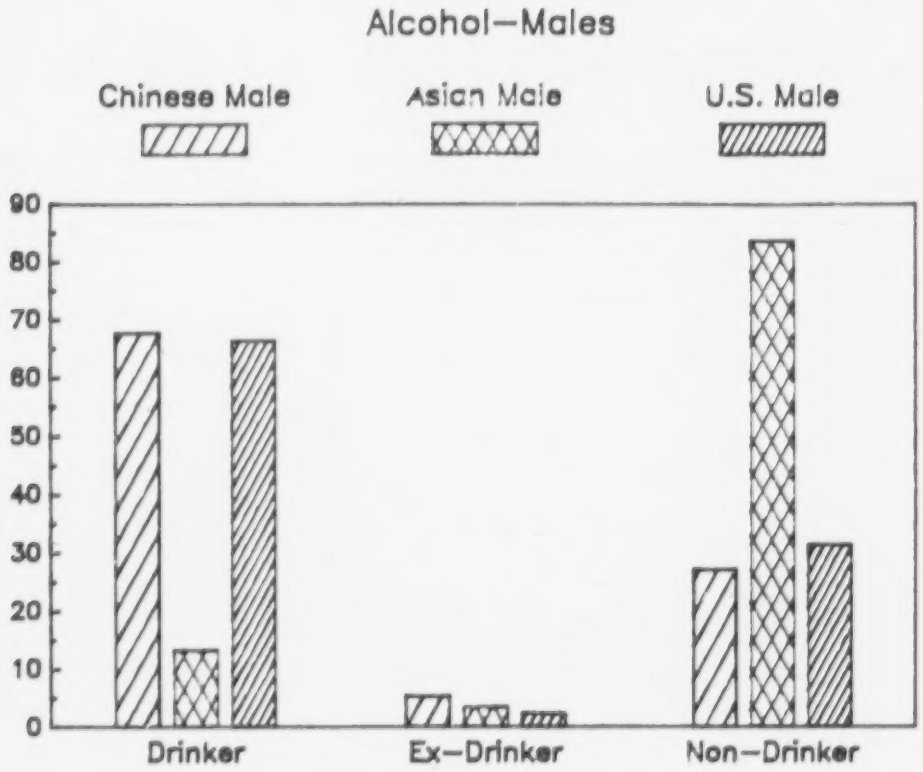
Based on correlations between lifestyle habits and appraised age, decreasing the smoking and drinking habits (considered a healthier lifestyle by health appraisal experts) can lead to decreases in appraised ages and a decrease in smoking related illnesses, alcoholism, and absenteeism. (Berry, 1981)

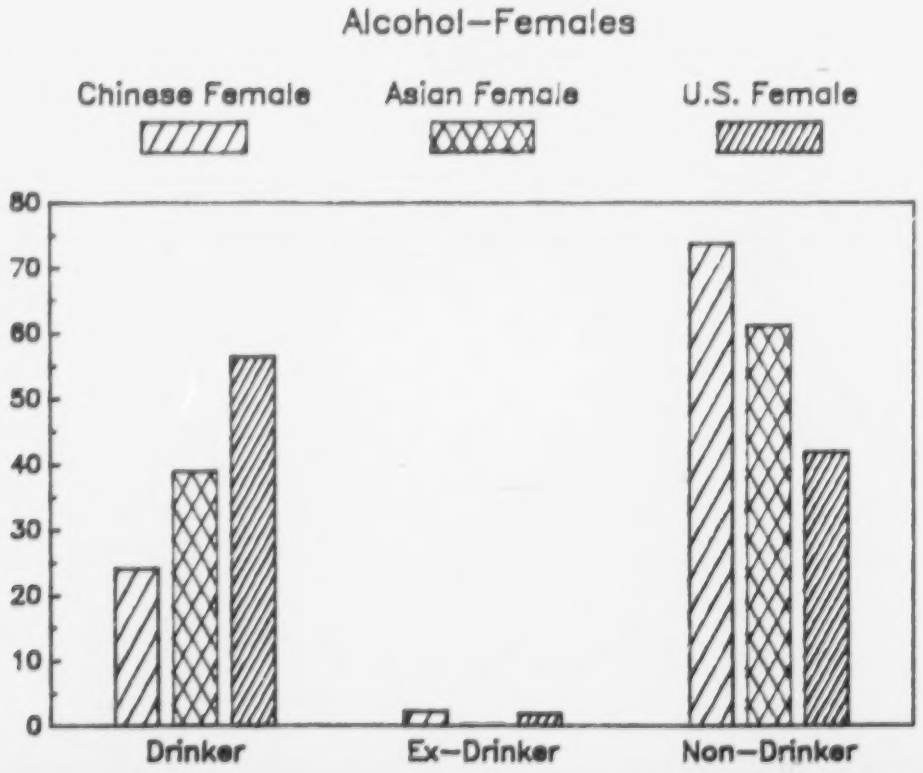
Alcohol consumption comparisons are in Table 15.

Table 15
Alcohol Use

	Chinese	*Asian*	*U.S.*
Drinkers	49.1%	79.2%	53.5%
Ex-drinkers	4.1	0.7	4.6
Non-drinkers	46.0	20.1	41.8
Drinkers - Drinks per week			
Less than 7	64.8	58.6	—
8-24	24.4	33.8	—
Over 25	10.8	6.8	—

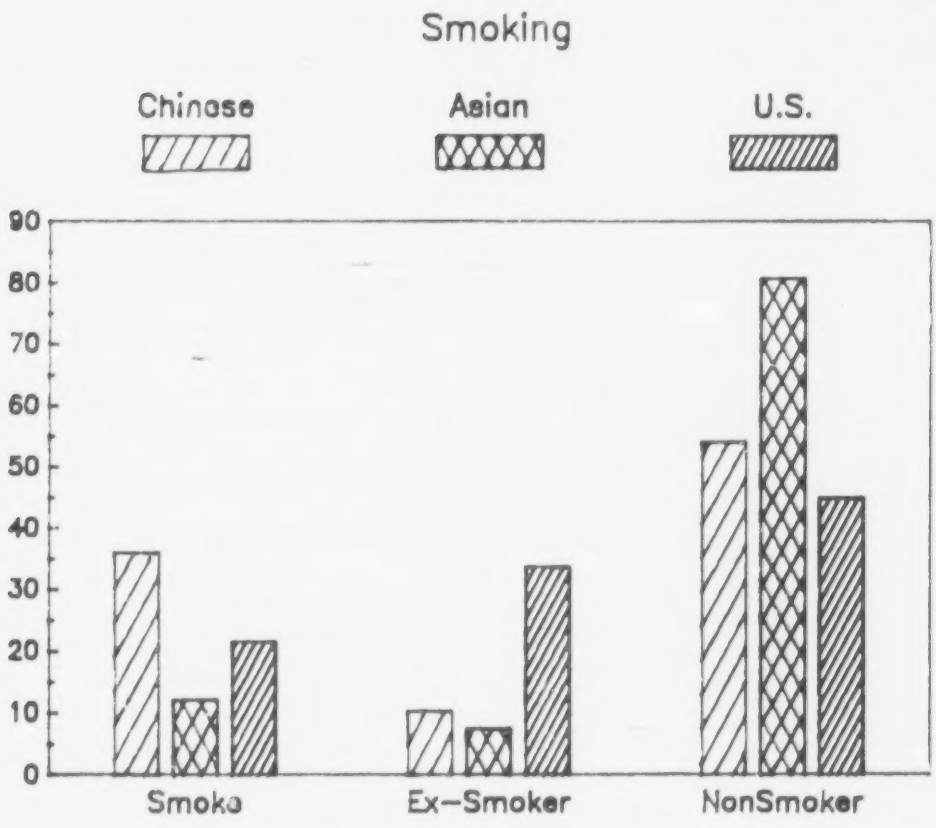


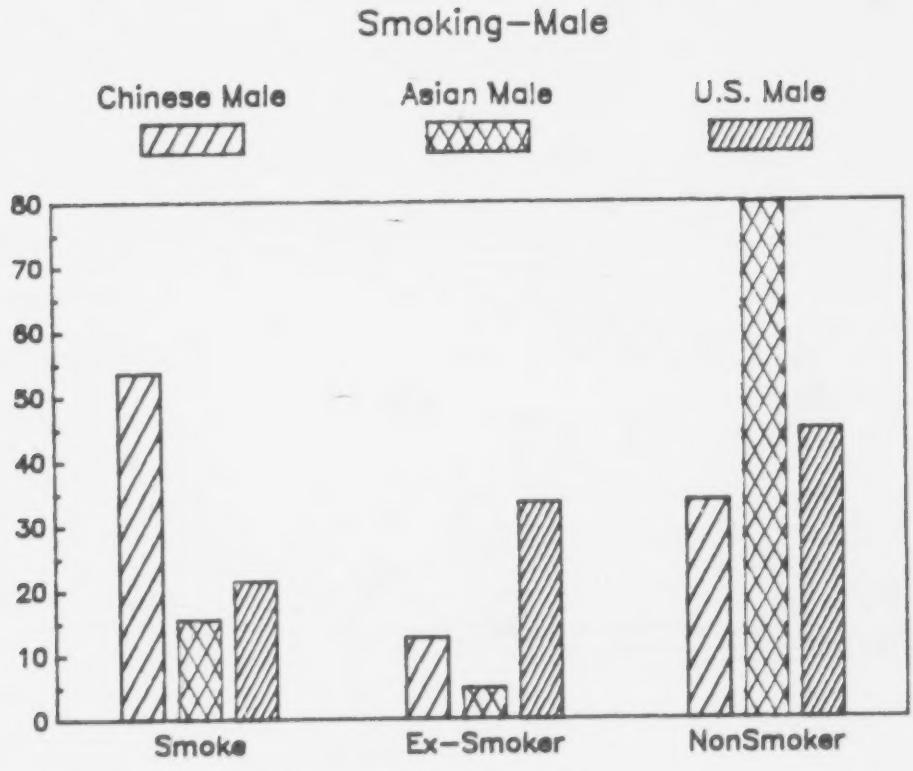

Alcohol—Males
Chinese Male
Asian Male
U.S. Male
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
Drinker
Ex—Drinker
Non—Drinker

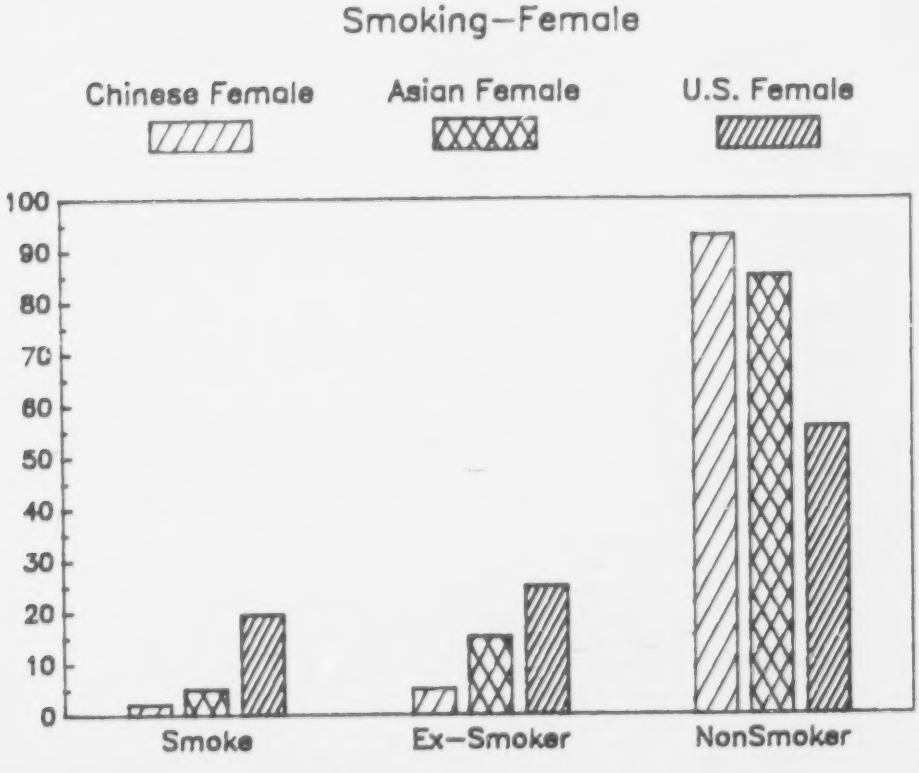

Alcohol—Females
Chinese Female
Asian Female
U.S. Female
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
Drinker
Ex—Drinker
Non—Drinker

Smoking

	Chinese	*Asian*	*U.S.*
Smoke	35.9%	12.0%	21.3%
Ex-smoker	10.2	7.4	31.7
Never smoked	53.9	80.6	47.0




Smoking—Male
Chinese Male
Asian Male
U.S. Male
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
Smoke
Ex—Smoker
NonSmoker


Smoking—Female
Chinese Female
Asian Female
U.S. Female
100
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
Smoke
Ex—Smoker
NonSmoker

Physical Activities

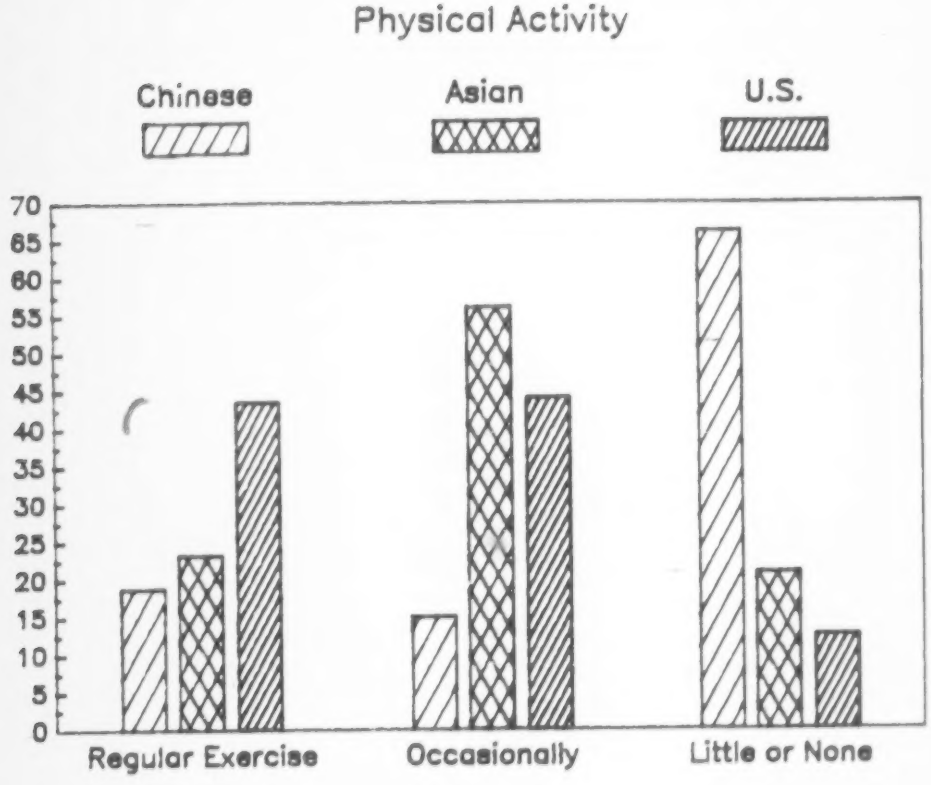
Managers in the U.S. recognize that as a nation increasing emphasis is being placed on fitness and wellness, in part due to some research that implies physical fitness and exercise lower stress. (e.g., Kramish, 1986b; Howard, 1985/1986) Organized physical activity in the U.S. workplace or in private clubs — aerobics, jogging clubs, bicycle clubs, physical rehabilitation centers — is not unusual. Two-thirds (66.2 percent) of the Chinese managers suggest they engage in little or no organized or formal physical activity as walking briskly, running, lifting, or carrying. Furthermore, only 18.8 percent of them engage in any sustained physical exercise outside of the workplace. One could argue, however, that such activity occurs in the workplace, but as a supplement to work activity there appears to be little conscious effort.

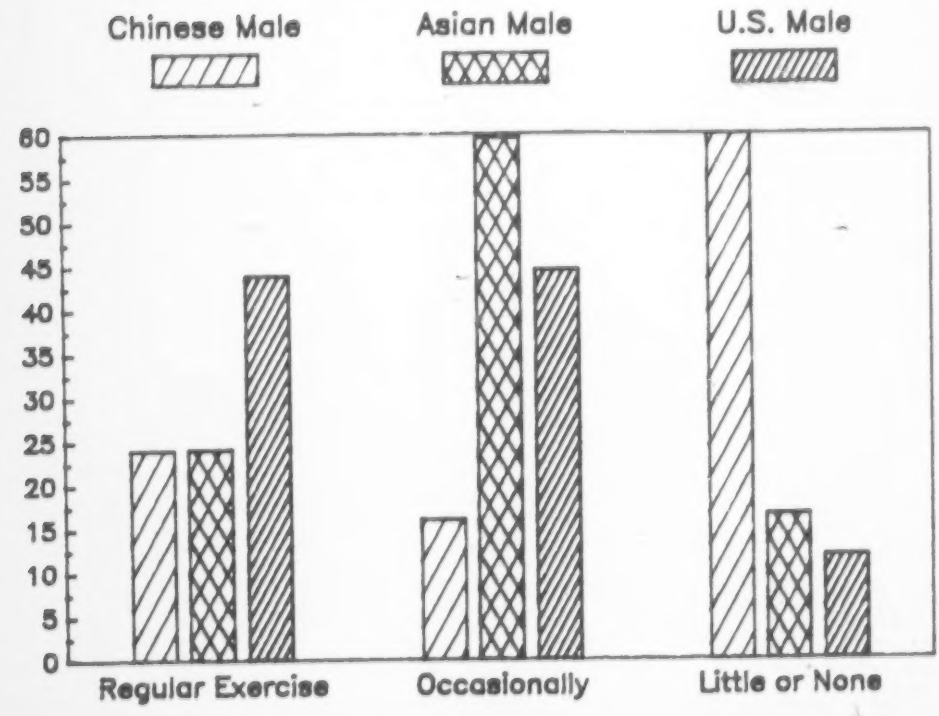
U.S. managers, in vivid contrast, regularly engage in physical activities (43.4 percent) suggesting they do so. Of the U.S. reference sample of 8,720, only 11.1 percent said they engage in little or no physical activity and 45.4 percent said they did so occasionally.

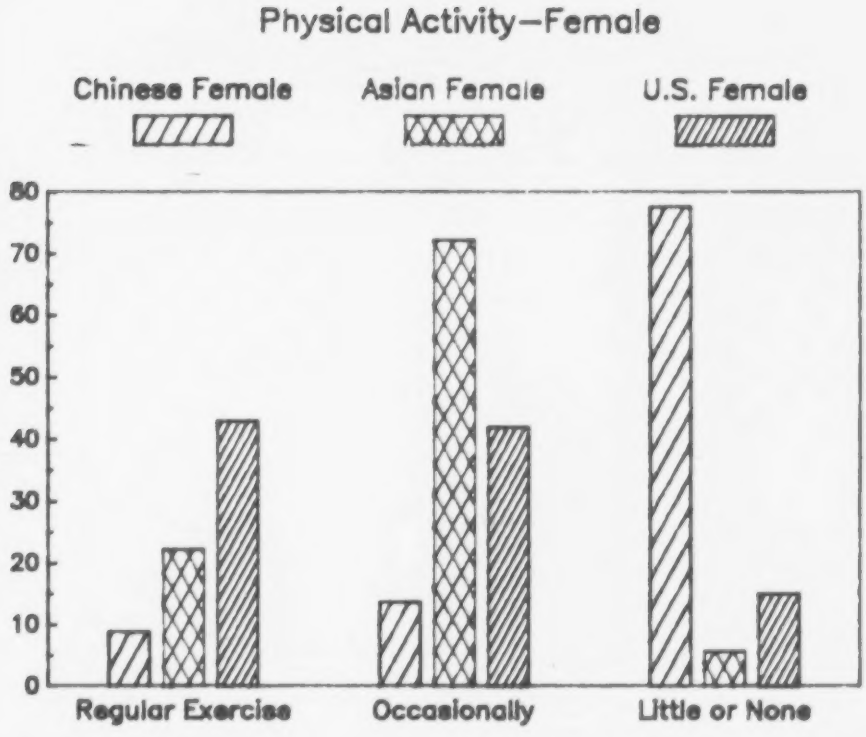
Reasons for the wide cultural variation are hard to quantify; several reasons seem apparent. There are first, to the two authors of this study, few public physical fitness facilities in China comparable to those in the U.S. While there is interest in keeping fit, such activity occurs in unstructured environments as the common half-hour bicycle ride to get to and from work.

Others suggest second, that with a six-day work week, eight hours a day, that activity includes enough physical exertion without adding additional planned physical activities. Likewise, people do not have money to spend on fitness activity.

A third reason is that people are too busy. Shopping is done on foot or via the bicycle, waits in line are involved in many activities, and distances between activities are often great. Purchasing fresh vegetables daily, for instance, takes considerable time. There is, in short, little time for planned physical activity. What U.S. managers take for granted takes inordinate time and effort in China.


Physical Activity
Chinese
Asian
U.S.
70
65
60
55
50
45
40
35
30
25
20
15
10
5
0
Regular Exercise
Occasionally
Little or None


Physical Activity—Male
Chinese Male
Asian Male
U.S. Male
60
55
50
45
40
35
30
25
20
15
10
5
0
Regular Exercise
Occasionally
Little or None



Sleeping Patterns

This last health-related behavior suggests that Chinese managers sleep less; 29.4 percent of them sleep less than 6 hours per night compared with 22.7 percent for the U.S. reference sample. About half of the Chinese managers (49.3 percent) sleep seven hours per day — as do the U.S. managers (49.5 percent) — 19.7 percent sleep eight hours a day, and 1.6 percent more than nine hours. Some managers suggest that the amount of time needed to accomplish life sustaining activities is longer than in the U.S. and that travel to and from work is time consuming, thus there is less time for sleep.

18. Physiological Comparisons

It is a common western assumption that the Chinese are shorter, weigh less, and probably have lower blood pressure and cholesterol levels. Clarification of these assumptions applicable to the Chinese managers follow.

Height

It is an Asian trait to be shorter than western man, thus the mean height of the Chinese male and female manager was 5'5" and 5'2", decidedly shorter than the U.S. reference sample of males and females, 5'10" and 5'4" respectively. The shorter stature clearly accounts for the Chinese managers' decreased weight.

Body weight

U.S. female managers would envy their Chinese counterparts as 63.6 percent of them are underweight as measured by the Metropolitan Life Tables. (*Desirable Weights*, 1959) The average Chinese female manager has a mean weight of 118.8 pounds as compared with 134.6 for the U.S. female manager. Height variations have been taken into consideration.

Again allowing for differences in height, Chinese male managers are likewise underweight: 51.4 percent fall into that category whereas only 16.2 percent of the U.S. male managers are underweight. The mean weight of the Chinese male was 145.2 compared with the U.S. male at 179.5. Unknown in both instances is the body frame, influencing overall weight. Body weight comparisons are found in Table 16.

Table 16
Body Weight

	Chinese			*U.S.*		
	Total	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*	*Male*	*Female*
Underweight	55.7%	51.4%	63.6%	27.5%	16.2%	48.3%
0-10% overweight	26.6	29.4	21.4	32.3	34.9	27.4
More than 10% overweight	17.7	19.1	14.9	40.2	48.9	24.4

Blood Pressure

One might assume that in a country where there is a steady emphasis on health and wellness that U.S. managers would be informed about their personal health on matters as blood pressure and cholesterol. Chinese managers are more aware of their blood pressure level than U.S. managers, 44.7 percent to 34.9 percent respectively. A suggested reason is that many workplaces have their own medical facilities; a manager can quickly receive basic medical treatment

quite like the U.S. manager. Regardless, both groups of managers appear to leave their blood pressure data in the hands of their doctors.

Additionally, of the Chinese managers who knew their blood pressure, only 7 percent were above the commonly accepted safe level of 140 whereas 24.2 percent of the U.S. sample were in that group. Mean systolic and diastolic blood pressure for the Chinese and the U.S. reference sample was 117.6, 121.5 and 78.3 and 77.5 respectively.

Cholesterol Levels

Both Chinese (93.3 percent) and the U.S. sample (84.9 percent) do not know their cholesterol levels. One can make the assumption that that information is known by the doctor and when levels become abnormally high the patient is informed. While the sample is small for the Chinese, those who did know their cholesterol level had a mean reading of 247.5, quite high and potentially predisposing the Chinese managers to both coronary heart disease and stroke, attributes commonly associated with high cholesterol and smoking habits. (McMichael, 1978) That cholesterol reading compares with the sample U.S. level of 211.4.

19. Quality of Life Indicators

Research in the U.S. continues to suggest the problems and dangers associated with stress. (See particularly the excellent analysis by Kasl, 1978; Cooper and Marshall, 1976; and Glowinkowski and Cooper, 1986) This study does not assess the level of stress in Chinese managers, who although they did not specifically indicate their stress level, suggested orally that tensions from the ongoing changes in their enterprises, the government, and the Party do impact upon them. It is also a given that the common denominator among managers and other business persons in diverse industries (e.g., Loo, 1984; Parker & DeCotiis, 1983; Owens, 1986) is stress, regardless of nationality, and when not controlled can lead to illness and other dysfunctions.

A vast amount of research and literature is available on the topic of employee stress, defined by one writer (Levitt, 1982) as "those events or conditions which are experienced as a threat to any facet of one's well-being . . . and can threaten such aspects of human existence as one's physical condition, financial status, self-image, beliefs, aspirations, expectations, and interpersonal relations." Some feel stressors are addictive (Holmes and Rahe, 1982), suggesting that China's contemplated economic and industrial changes may increase managerial stress factors.

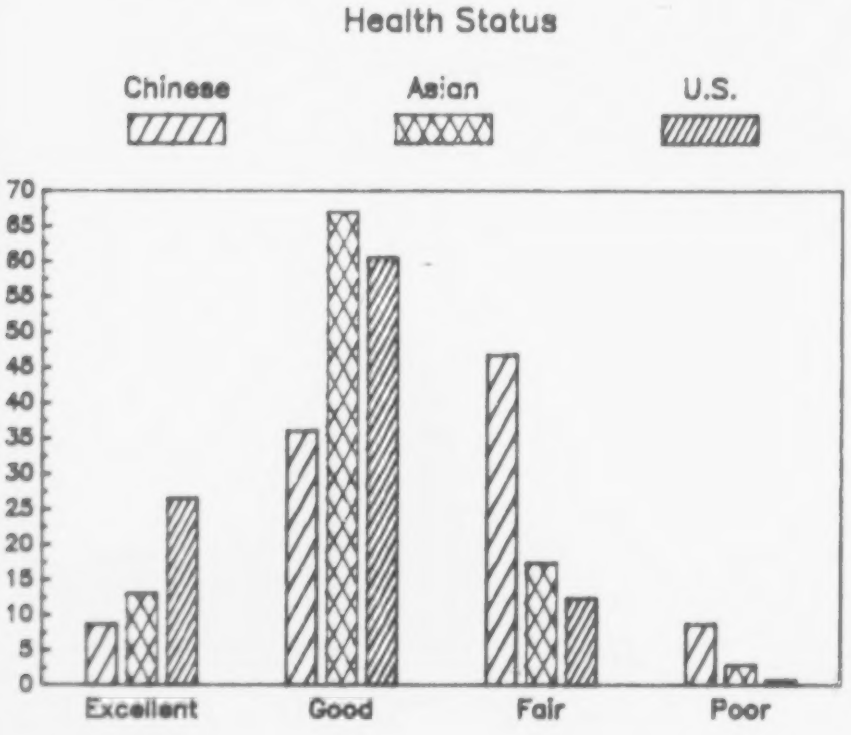
Two edited works reviewing the stressors in employees and management are found in Cooper and Payne (1978) and Gowler and Legge (1975). Database searches suggest hundreds of additional references relevant to the stress factor. More important than identifying specific stressors, however, are the moderators which counteract those influences. These are what industrial psychologists and health researchers call moderators of stress, that is, actions and activities which prevent stress turning into strain. Blanchard, Edington, and Blanchard (1986) state that these moderators "are the same ingredients people talk about when they are asked to describe peak periods in their lives — times when they were feeling exceptionally good, feeling on top of the world," as seen in the following four quality of life indicators evaluated by the Chinese managers.

Self-Reported Health Status

One of the better predictors of a person's long-term health is the perception of his present health; the more positive the response the more positive a portent for the future. Both the Chinese and Asian managers rate their health perception as "excellent" much lower than their U.S. counterparts, 8.6 percent, 13 percent, and 26.5 percent respectively. [illegible] nese managers feel they are in poor health (6[illegible] cent) than either the other Asian managers [illegible] percent) and the U.S. managers (0.7 percent). In considering these data one must remember that the mean age is nearly 39.

Table 17 _
Health Status

Health Status	*Chinese Managers*	*Asian Managers*	*U.S. Managers*
Excellent	8.6%	13.0%	26.5%
Good	36.0	66.9	60.5
Fair	46.7	17.3	12.3
Poor	8.6	2.8	0.7



Social Support

Throughout Chinese history the family has been the core of living, some even speaking of "familial immortality" (Blunden and Elvion, 1983, p. 214) as a contributor to both past and present relationships. And increasingly, as part of that family the position of the woman has gained in status, giving her recognition beyond the bearing of children, putting her into the workplace, and therefore giving her stressors similar to but in some ways unlike that of the male. (Jick; Mitz, 1985) One recent study in the U.S. (Dooley, Rook, Catalano, 1987) and several previous investigations

(Cassel, 1976; Cobb, 1976) indicate one of the moderators of stress is social relationships, suggesting that the interactive effects of a positive social environment results in a decrease in stress. House (1980) supports that assertion in his recent study of factory workers on the effects of social support:

> Of all the conditioning variables, social support clearly has the strongest and most pervasive effects. Despite the probable weakness of cross-sectional designs for detecting interactive conditioning effects, social support conditions the relationship of a significant number of objective or perceived stress factors to virtually every health outcome, as well as conditioning the impact of job characteristics on perceived stress . . . Thus situational factors, specially social support, seem to offer special promise as potential factors mitigating the impact of job characteristics on perceived stress, and of both of these on health.

Because of the strength of the family throughout Chinese history, one might presume that social support of the Chinese manager is higher than other nationalities. That is not entirely true, for when asking the Chinese managers the degree of strength of their social ties with their family, 57.4 percent suggested a "very strong" relationship. What makes that statistic interesting (and surprising to Chinese and western readers) is that U.S. top level executives — no comparable question was asked of either Asian or U.S. managers — rate their family relationships even higher, 68 percent suggested a "very strong" relationship with their family.

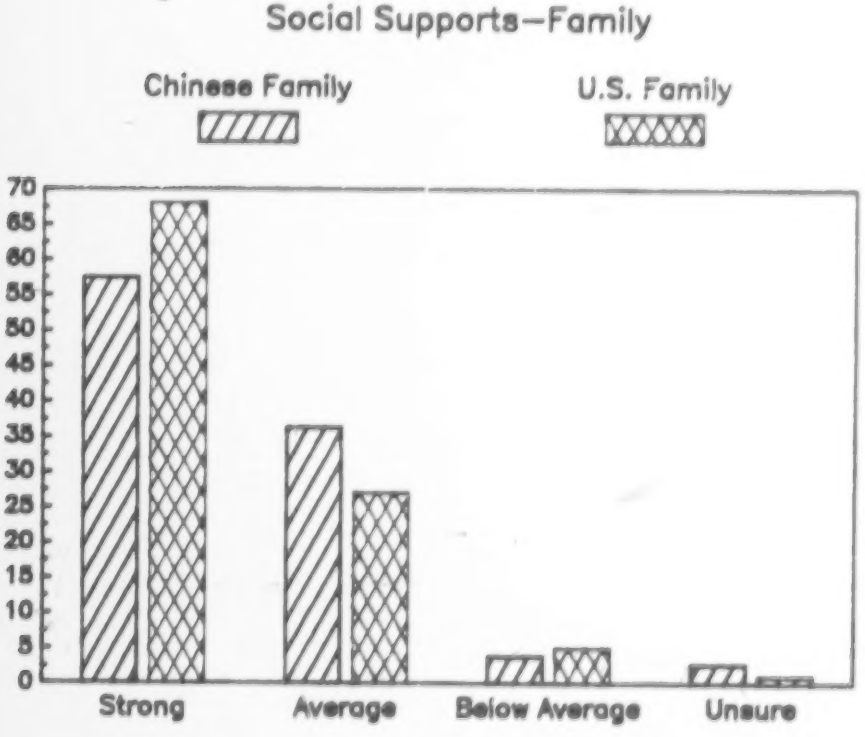
We have given considerable thought to these differences. Hypotheses, untested of course, include the pressures of close extended family living; daytime separation from children during a six-day work-week; a small physical living space devoid of privacy, especially for young married couples in the same extended family environment; the lack of modern conveniences demanding common household chores to be completed on the one free work day (Sunday); and youthful discontents brought into the home, in

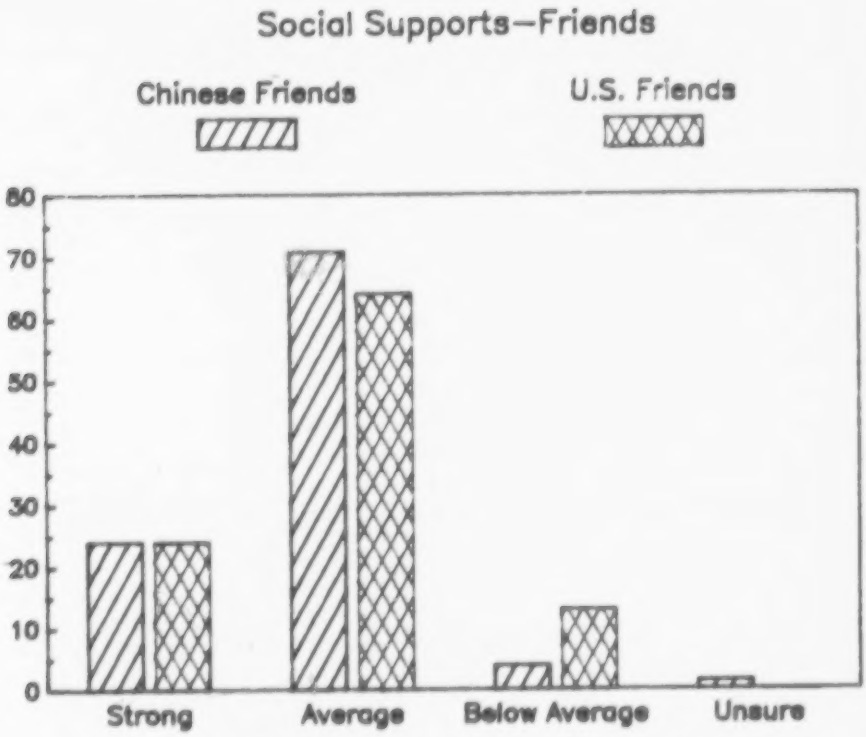
part due to their centrally assigned place of work and potential lack of mobility in the workplace. Those observations need further investigation, but suggest some initial thoughts.

A positive emphasis on the family continues in the U.S.: (Handy, 1978; Hildebrandt, Miller, Bond, Edington, 1983-1987) longitudinal data of the Chinese manager will indicate whether the family as a strong social tie will also continue to increase. In the obvious second position is social ties with friends, for both the Chinese managers and U.S. executives.

Table 18
Social Supports

	Chinese Manager		*U.S. Executive*	
Social Support	*Family*	*Friends*	*Family*	*Friends*
Strong	57.4%	24.0%	68.0%	24.0%
Average	36.2	70.8	27.0	64.0
Below Average	3.8	3.9	5.0	13.0
Unsure	2.7	1.4	1.0	—





Life Satisfaction

One of the quality-of-life questions sought to answer the Chinese managers' lifestyle satisfaction, that is, what subjective response did they have to life itself? We suggest no primary cause why only 10.5 percent of them are "Completely Satisfied" with life. That low affirmation is in dramatic contrast to the higher 55.2 percent of the U.S. sample but somewhat in agreement with the 13 percent of the Asian managers. A higher percentage of the Chinese managers are also "not very satisfied" with life (3.3 percent) compared to the U.S. sample at 1.7 percent, and the Asian managers at 7.7 percent.

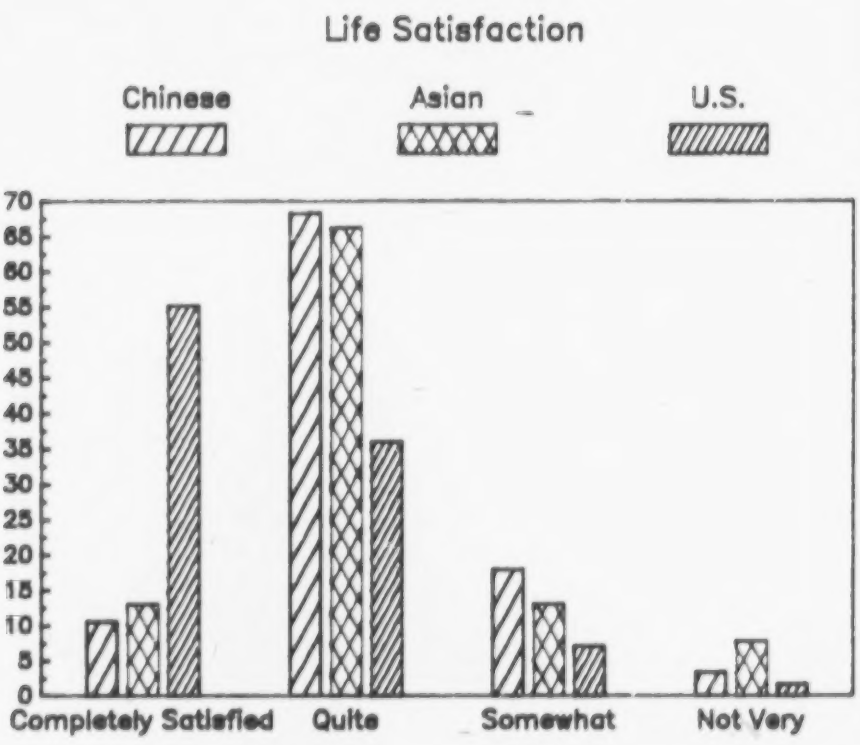
Anecdotal responses in interviews supply hints for a commonality of causes for the lower quality of life designation of the Chinese and Asian managers, in part similar to the concerns noted above under social ties with the family: (1) close physical proximity in the workplace; (2) small housing accommodations[4] (average living space per person declined from 4.5 square meters prior to 1982 to 3.6 square meters in 1984),

(Woodard, Banister, 1987); (3) little opportunity for privacy after marriage because of the traditional but changing extended family concept; (4) the challenges to obtaining an advanced education for their children; (5) discomfort with the urban versus the rural environment (in 1953 87 percent of the population lived in the countryside, in 1986 that percentage had dropped to 79 percent, that figure possibly decreasing considerably by the year 2000, thus placing even more people into the cities). (Woodward, Banister, 1987); (6) extended periods of time needed to meet daily living requirements such as shopping; (7) comments about low-wage scales as the price of goods increase; (8) concern about receiving a position assigned them by the government; and (9) some fear that their children will not receive a position in an enterprise commensurate with a higher education.

A review of the above possible causes suggests that most concerns centered around factors over which managers have little ability to influence the outcome, according to Burgoyne's (1975) concept, one of the powerful variables producing stress. Regardless of causalities, the Chinese managers' satisfaction with their lifestyle — at the "Completely Satisfied" level — was dramatically lower than the western managers.

Table 19
Life Satisfaction

Life Satisfaction	*Chinese Managers*	*Asian*	*U.S.*
Completely satisfied	10.5%	13.0%	55.2%
Quite satisfied	68.3	66.2	36.0
Somewhat satisfied	17.9	13.0	7.1
Not very satisfied	3.3	7.7	1.7



Job Satisfaction

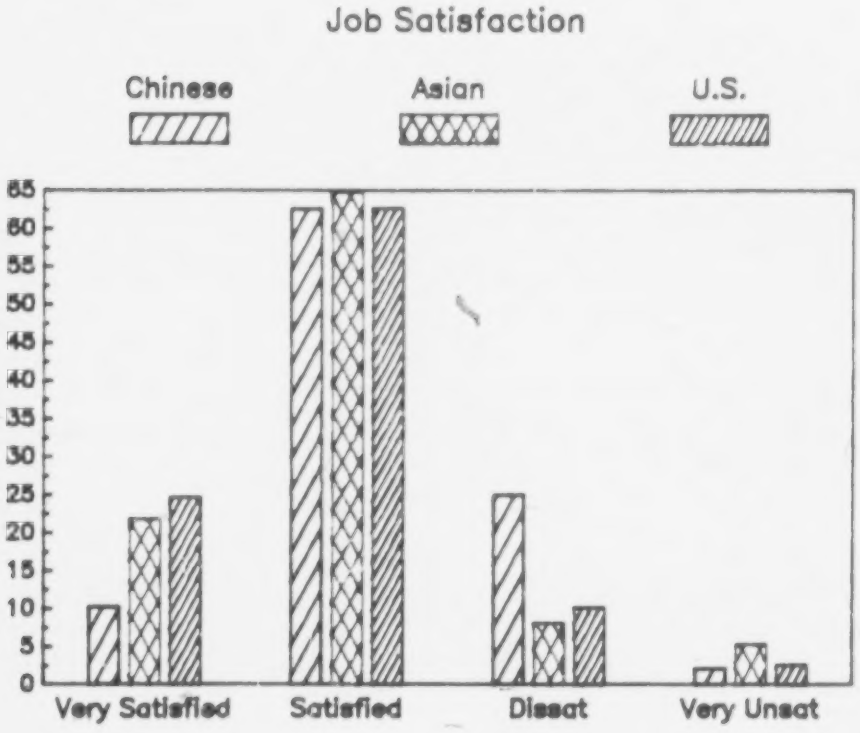
Some disagreement exists (Cooper and Payne, 1978) as to the intensity of job-related stressors, yet recent studies continue to emphasize job satisfaction (Howard, 1986; Kramish, 1986a; Howard, Cunningham, Rechnitzer, 1986) as a moderator associated with job stress. We do not know the stress level of the Chinese managers, but 10.2 percent of them are "Very Satisfied" with their job, in contrast to the 24.7 percent of the U.S. sample and 21.8 percent of the Asian managers.

It is risky to assign causality for the lower "Very Satisfied" category of the Chinese managers. It is tempting to suggest, as based on several studies (French, Caplan, 1970; Buck, 1972; Margolis, Kroes, Quinn, 1974; Kasl, 1973; Quinn, Seashore, Mangione, 1971) that less opportunity for decision-making, low self-esteem, and little autonomy in the workplace are potential factors. But those generalizations demand a concentrated look at the Chinese managers as compared with U.S. samples. What makes such research

important is that the Chinese managers are less "Very Disappointed" (2.1 percent) as compared with the Asian and U.S. managers, 5.3 percent and 2.6 percent respectively.

Table 20
Job Satisfaction

Job Satisfaction	*Chinese*	*Asian*	*U.S.*
Very satisfied	10.2%	21.8%	24.7%
Satisfied	62.6	64.8	62.7
Dissatisfied	25.0	8.1	10.2
Very disappointed	2.1	5.3	2.6



SUMMARY PROFILE

Who than are the Chinese middle managers? Two-thirds are male, nearly 39 years old, inclined to little physical exercise for they work over 52 hours weekly, in a position often assigned by the government, most often in the city where they were born. Mobility within the Chinese enterprise and within the country itself is difficult.

The older their age the less their education. Post-graduate degree managers are all but non-existent, in great measure due to exigencies beyond their control: lack of institutions offering advanced degree work; the Cultural Revolution; and a predominantly agrarian economy. Nearly one-third earning an undergraduate degree majored in engineering, but would today recommend majoring in business administration.

They support finance, marketing, and accounting as major preparatory courses for business, relegating business communication — highly recommended in the U.S. — to a lower rung, in part because the government and Party centrally influence enterprise direction, leaving little room for oral debate and discussion.

Career progress is slow, over a quarter of the managers spending 15 or more years in the same position. Most tracks are parallel to U.S. counterparts: they begin in Production/Operations and then move to general management. When given a choice of how to reach the top of an organization their recommendations parallel U.S. counterparts: choose the general management route. The Political/Ideological path is ranked second, suggesting that the Party system is another route to the top.

While U.S. managers are predominantly first-born, the Chinese manager is middle-born — the first child having to help support the family — into a home where a third of the mothers work outside the home, most often as laborers. Their fathers were foremost laborers, cadres — officials or managers — and professionals.

Marriage patterns, for the males, are no different than U.S. or Southeast Asian managers: over three-quarters are in their first marriage. Nearly three-quarters of Chinese female managers, however, are also in their first marriage; much greater than U.S. female managers where about 42 percent are in their first marriage. Their spouses work. Indeed, 95 percent of the wives of male managers work; 100 percent of the husbands of female managers work, most often at similar occupation levels of the other spouse. There is relative parity of their education level.

Over a third smoke, cigarettes primarily. They also drink, beer most often, at a level approaching the 50 percent level of their U.S. counterparts. Taking into account differences in height, U.S. female managers may be envious: nearly two-thirds of the female Chinese managers are underweight; half of the Chinese male managers fall into that category. Few know their blood pressure or cholesterol level.

Disconcerting is the fact that only one out of ten consider their health excellent; that low evaluation is parallel with their Asian counterparts but out of sync with higher evaluations by U.S managers. Surprisingly, their social ties with their families are no greater than U.S. top-level executives.

Finally, they are relatively satisfied with their jobs, but not completely satisfied with their lifestyle, the latter falling below their U.S. and Asian counterpart evaluations.

Notes

[1] While the term Asian or Asia may also include mainland China, for purposes of differentiation we will use the term Asian to refer to the countries of Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, and Korea. We have resisted using the term South-East Asian because many of the "Asians" used for comparative purposes came from Hong Kong. Hong Kong Chinese (N = 249) make up the bulk of the sample with the others representing Singapore (62), Malaysia (5), and Korea (3), for a total of 319 "Asian" managers. Most data is taken from Hildebrandt and Miller (1978b) *A Managerial Profile: The Asian Manager*.

[2] The term enterprise is generic to the factories and other work units of the Chinese managers. While most of the managers (77.3 percent) came from the manufacturing sector, we use the term enterprise to refer to the other nonmanufacturing units as well. Because the term enterprise has a somewhat different meaning in the U.S. — usually the umbrella organization with numerous sub-units — we shall use the term company when referring to U.S. companies.

[3] The term "graduate" is less used in China when referring to students attending post-undergraduate or commonly known as graduate schools in the U.S. Hence the term "post-graduate" will be used when referring to studies beyond an undergraduate education.

[4] It is somewhat difficult to reach agreeement regarding housing size. A recent statement (*Resolutely Reform* [1988, January 29]) suggests that shortly after founding the People's Republic of China the average floor space in urban China was about 4.5 square meters. By 1985 that space had increased to 6.36 square meters in state housing for which residents pay about 0.13 yuan per square meter. At present about 20% of the total number of urban households live in their own residences. Regardless of apparently conflicting data, accommodations appear to be increasing in number and size.

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